*Week ending July 18 1953*
*Every Wednesday Fourpence*

# JOHN BULL

## IN THE WET by NEVIL SHUTE

**Articles by Liddell Hart, Harry Hopkins, Keith Ellis and Norman Phillips**

**Complete short stories by Lionel Davidson, Roy Macnab, David Walker**

**INSIDE DARTMOOR:** An authentic personal record of life in Britain's grimmest prison

# *We found so many women who believed in this way of washing!*

"I've always believed in Rinso", says Mrs. Carter, "its lather is so *thorough* yet so *gentle*. It's a joy to put your hands into! I keep to Rinso all the time—for everything! Nothing gets whites, coloureds and woollens so scrupulously, safely clean."

"Such a satisfying washday!" Everything finished, Mrs. Carter's sentiments about Rinso results are summed up in this picture, as she strolls with her mother and baby Stanley.

## "It's results that count with us" they say, "so it's Rinso for all the wash"

"What impressed me", said cameraman George Barclay, "is the terrific faith women seem to have in the very *name* of Rinso!"

We had sent him to get some authentic pictures of washday in the modern manner. At her home at Sevenoaks, he found Mrs. Joan Carter having a lighthearted washday with that thorough, gentle favourite, Rinso.

Here Mrs. Carter shows us why women are so enthusiastic about Rinso results.

**...RINSO for results**

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## EDITORIAL

# Death on wheels

EVERY day this month forty-six children are being knocked off their bicycles and injured. By the end of July, at least seventeen of them will be dead and 259 maimed for the rest of their lives. That is, if the 1951 figures are repeated—and signs are that they will be exceeded. In that year, 10,188 children on bicycles were hurt and 130 were killed.

A boy on a bicycle runs the greatest risk of sudden death of anyone in Britain, according to a recent report to the National Federation of Women's Institutes. An adolescent is in thirty times more danger on a bicycle than on foot. He is three times more likely to be killed than a child of six crossing roads for the first time.

MR. G. PRYS WILLIAMS, a member of the study group which produced this report, says: "To allow a child the free use of the roads as soon as he—or she—can balance on a bicycle is to connive at their self-destruction."

MR. WILLIAMS
*Parents are to blame*

Having collected evidence from twenty counties, the Women's Institutes add: "No child should be allowed to ride a bicycle on the road unless he has passed a test of his own fitness and the fitness of his machine."

Two-thirds of the accidents to child cyclists happen when they are just going straight ahead. Children cannot control a cycle as well as adults; they swerve from left to right, because of inexperience and often also because they are riding a bicycle too big for them. Only one inopportune swerve is needed and they are under a car.

Of the other accidents, three out of four are caused when a child turns right without signalling. Rear-view mirrors and some sort of simple direction indicator might help here, but only training backed by an effective threat to stop them riding can get naturally irresponsible youngsters to obey the rules of the traffic game.

To stop the tears, pain and blood, all young cyclists and cycles not fit to be on the roads must be removed from them. Schoolteachers would accept the additional burden of becoming riding examiners if their "licenses" were backed with the authority of the law.

IN the meantime, let every parent whose child rides a bicycle realize that the responsibility for his child's safety—and that of other road users—rests squarely on his shoulders. A man or woman who permits an incompetent child or an unroadworthy cycle on the streets may be guilty of as grave a crime as murder.

## THIS WEEK'S COVER

"CARS always break down at the worst possible moment," says Andrew Johnston. Once, his own ancient Buick failed when he was hurrying to entrain for Holland. After fiddling hopelessly, he left the car standing in Trafalgar Square. On his return to England, he found that the police had pushed it to Scotland Yard. He got it out of custody and still uses it for frequent trips to London from Cornwall. He says he prefers it to the "mouth-organ" models.

... that's

Bob Martin condition!

Clear, bright eyes, lovely coat, he's a credit to the whole family.

Just watch him beg for his Bob Martin's. Don't they taste good to him—and don't they do him good! That's because Bob Martin's are enriched by vitamins A and D, the essential vitamins of the B group and all the concentrated nutrients of whole, natural liver.

Put *your* dog on Bob Martin's today and see what perfect condition means to him.

From chemists and pet shops, 10d. & 2/-.

Ask your dealer

1. Which firm makes **most** portables?
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3. Which firm makes the **cheapest*** portables?

**CHEAPEST to buy in the first place and cheapest to RUN with long-life Vidor Batteries.*

He'll show you the Vidor 'Regatta'—tell you about its new LOW CONSUMPTION VALVES that save so much current—quote you the new tax-free reduced price for the batteries—and let you read the Vidor Guarantee-Card that goes with it. Every dealer, everywhere, is proud to sell the Vidor 'Regatta' CN 420 at **£12·14·6**

he will tell you—VIDOR

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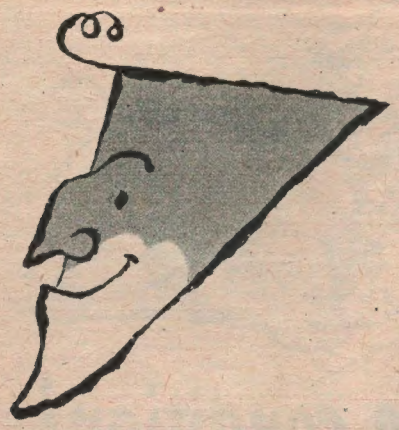

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***of breath and body freshness!***

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**Price 6d., 1/8 & 5/- from all Chemists.**

# FREE SPEECH

## The meadows leave the farms behind

MANY new houses are springing up in our village, and on my evening walk recently I noticed a local farmer looking glumly at the latest batch.

"Worried about the vanishing farm land?" I asked him. "It's not that," he replied. "I've plenty left. But my farmyard is getting farther and farther away from my fields." He explained that rows of new houses are isolating his meadows. "It's well over a mile now from my stockyards to the nearest grazing," he said. "Four times a day, we have to drive cows through busy streets, past gardens with open gates. Can you wonder that there are complaints?" He insisted that it was impossible to expand existing villages without upsetting their economy. "If we need dormitories for big cities, we should build complete new villages," he argued. "Then the farmers can work in peace." —G. N. L. C., Oxfordshire.

### *Official Middle*

AS JOHN BULL says, Meriden is traditionally regarded as the centre of England. But local inhabitants claim the same for Lillington Oak, on the outskirts of Leamington Spa; High Cross, where Fosse Way crosses Watling Street near Lutterworth; Naseby, in Northamptonshire; a cross at Henley-in-Arden; and Kenilworth Castle. Some years ago, though, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society fixed the centre as scientifically as possible—at a point between Higham-on-the-Hill and Caldecote, about two miles north of Nuneaton, in Warwickshire.—MRS. M. L. H., London, S.W.17.

*"This was done in 1941 by Sir Charles Arden-Close," says the Royal Geographical Society. "The precise location of this position is latitude 52 degrees 33 minutes north, and longitude 1 degree 28 minutes west."*

### *Tender Plants*

WHILE I was out, the nurseryman delivered several boxes of bedding-out plants. In a glass container with them was this note: "We are only baby plants cramped in this box cot, and until we are planted out in our big bed, give to us each night a drink of water. Many thanks." My nurseryman obviously has the welfare of his produce at heart.—B. RICHMOND, Edmund Avenue, Sheffield, Yorkshire.

### *Mixed Marriages*

MY husband and I were married in a register office quite as attractive as Mr. Grimaldi's (JOHN BULL, June 27). Thick carpet led to a large room, panelled in light oak. There were rich curtains, and a long, polished table heaped with flowers. The registrar, dressed in a morning suit, was dignified and kindly. Two friends of ours witnessed the wedding, and a few weeks later we went to theirs, in an adjoining London borough. The office was in a dilapidated house, at the top of dark, dirty stairs. There were two little rooms, with wooden chairs and a small writing table. Worst of all, we had to wait for the registrar. When he came, he wore a rumpled suit, had a pen in his hand, and proceeded to gabble through the whole ceremony as quickly as possible. —MRS. ELSIE GRIFFITHS, London.

### *Tensing Of Everest*

IS "Tiger" Tensing, who took part in the successful assault on Everest, the man who was pictured in JOHN BULL'S account of the Nanga Parbat expedition? I have seen his last name given as Bhutia, which makes me wonder if he can be a Sherpa, as the Bhutia race inhabit the same part of the Himalayas and also supply porters for mountaineering expeditions.—A. J. MOLLOY, Rock Street, Sheffield.

*Tensing Bhutia has been on twenty Himalayan expeditions. He climbed Nanga Parbat in 1950 and 1951; the first expedition was described for* JOHN BULL *by Richard Marsh in February, 1953. All Himalayan porters are loosely called Sherpas—the name means "man from the east"—but the Sherpa and Bhutia tribes supply the finest men. Tensing was born on the Tibetan side of Everest, and is really a Bhutia. "Tiger" is a nickname given to porters who have climbed above 24,000 feet.*

### *Smallest Church*

A FEW years ago, I spent a holiday in Wales, and found what must surely be the smallest church in Britain ("Free Speech," June 27). It is the church of St. Trillo, on the beach at Rhos-on-Sea, near Colwyn Bay. There are seats for six persons, and the altar is about as large as a kitchen table.—MRS. N. SUTCLIFFE, Southtown, Gt. Yarmouth.

. . . The inside measurements of St. Trillo's are approximately four feet by five feet.—F. M., Cheshire.

### *By Numbers*

THE other day I realized with a shock that, officially, I seem to be a mere cipher. If the navy recalls me for service it quotes C/J 20600. To draw my naval pension I sign 24569. If I lose my pension book I quote PN 764869. My national registration number is W.O.E. 3890911. To the doctor I am 7662789. My civil service number is B 40820, and my pay number is 91400. My only disappointment is that the income-tax authorities give me such a low number as 23 for my tax code.—MR. C/J 20600 (etc.), Sparkford, Somerset.

### *Dicky At School*

MRS. HOOD made some interesting remarks about Richard Attenborough's schooldays ("Free Speech," June 20), but I must hasten to the defence of my old pupil—who did not fail all his examinations at Wyggeston. I was senior science master at the school from 1916 to 1946, and I can say that, apart from winning the school's senior vocal music prize in 1939, he passed his General School Examination in 1940. In the annual school examinations he did as well as most—he was certainly no failure.—ALWYN PICKLES, M.Sc., Wentworth Road, Leicester.

*"I passed my General Schools exam. all right," agrees Richard. "But I remember that science let me down in matriculation. Mr. Pickles's subject was a complete mystery to me, I'm afraid, although he was an expert at stage lighting for the school drama society."*

### *Young Terrors*

NOT only postwar children are sensitive about strange objects ("Free Speech," June 27). Twenty years ago, my small son was frightened of a hairdresser's shop with a dummy head displayed in the window. And he was terrified of the fish man "because his whiskers looked like shrimps."—L. C. POLE, Gainsboro Road, Leicester.

. . . My little girl is scared of telephone kiosks. My husband feels it is cruel to take her past one, but I am hoping that familiarity will breed contempt.—MRS. J. A., London.

. . . As a child I was frightened by the newel post at the head of the stairs, and by "faces" in the wallpaper design.—MRS. M. LAMBERT, Milbank Terrace, Redcar, Yorkshire.

. . . I am a very prewar baby, but when I was about three I was scared of my shadow.—B. M., Warwickshire.

### *Old Goldfish*

TWENTY-ONE years ago, my brothers were given two goldfish. One of the fish died soon after, but the other lived on happily until three years ago. Then we found him floating on the water in his bowl—and gave him up for dead. But we noticed a slight twitch, and dosed him with brandy and crushed aspirin. Today, he is as frisky as ever—and knocks on his bowl every evening for his meal of ants' eggs.—E. PRISTLEY, Ashforth Avenue, Marlpool, Derbyshire.

### *Dark And Dismal*

AS I opened the door of a country inn on a glorious summer evening, I was shocked to find the interior as dark as

a cinema. At first I thought there had been a death in the house. Then my eyes became accustomed to the gloom, and I saw a group of locals, including the landlord, silently watching a television play. With my thirst unquenched I came out into the sunlight. And I wondered if, after all, there hadn't been a death—the death of good company.—H. S., Chester.

### *Sunday Treat*

JOHN BULL'S cover on Father's Day (June 20) was very amusing. Our children have always regarded Sunday as a sort of Parents' Day, when Mother and Father can stay in bed and enjoy the delights of breakfast cooked for them. This is not always the treat it is meant to be. My wife and I have become competent actors at tackling dried-up egg, shrivelled bacon and burnt toast with relish. But the children think they are doing us a great favour, and we'll leave them with that impression.—C. M., Suffolk.

### *Doctor's View*

PERSONALLY, I do not agree with your Editorial that prejudice or indifference on the part of the doctor accounts for lack of analgesia in childbirth ("Needless Pain," JOHN BULL, June 27). I find that even gas-and-air

is of great benefit to all concerned—midwife, mother and doctor—and there are many doctors who would prefer to attend confinements themselves and use analgesia. But our surgeries are crowded, mainly with people having trivial complaints. Our visiting lists are also large—with many unnecessary calls. Even at this time of the year there are doctors working at least a twelve-hour day, apart from night calls.—DOCTOR, Scotland.

### *Big Money*

I AM always paid in £5 notes. Usually, I change these at my place of work, but the other day the office staff could not manage this. When I went to a large store and tried to pay for a £3 order with one of my notes, the assistant politely informed me that she could not accept a £5 note from a stranger. The manager finally gave his permission—provided I would sign my name and address on the back of the note. Why all this fuss? — MRS. S. S. H., Thorneycroft Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire.

*"There is always the risk of counterfeit notes," says the Bank of England. "For example, the Germans printed them during the war, and some may be in circulation. They are almost perfect."*

*COMING SOON IN JOHN BULL*

**ABOVE US THE WAVES**

**The thrilling real-life story of Britain's underwater commandos**

*See announcement on page 34*

### *Unseen Flowers*

AS I walked round the King George V memorial gardens in Eldon Square, Reading, I noticed that some flowers were planted on a high bank. They were all sweet-smelling, and each clump had a bronze plaque by it. The plaques bore the flowers' names in ordinary lettering, and what looked like Braille writing. I was told that this garden was for the special benefit of the blind.—HENRY L. G. HEATH, Hamilton Road, Reading, Berkshire.

### *Bus On Rails*

INSTEAD of closing the small branch lines in this country, British Railways should follow France's example. When my friend and I visited that country recently, we were surprised at the good railway service by single-track lines to many out-of-the-way villages.

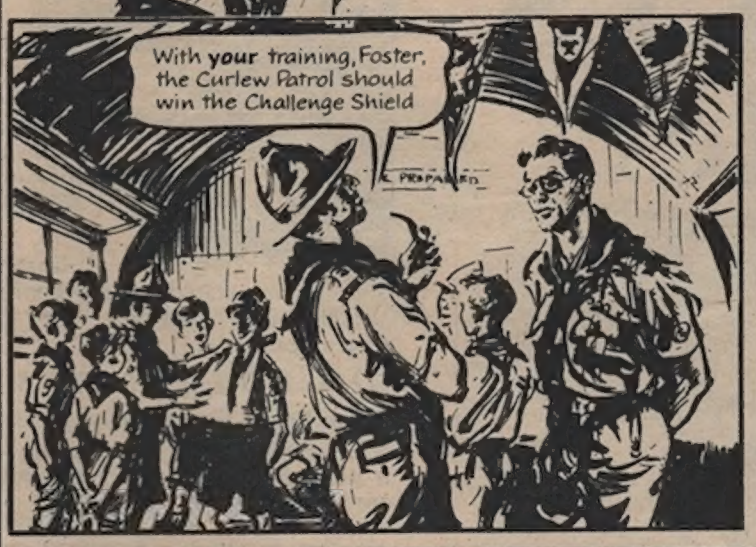
*Diesel rail cars on British Railways*

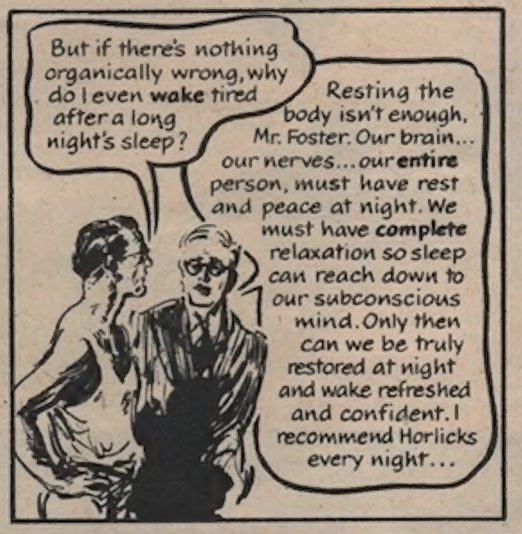
The secret seemed to be diesel-engined single coaches resembling buses rather than trains. They are comfortable, clean and fast. — W. DUNCAN NEEDHAM, Ongar Road, Writtle, Chelmsford, Essex.

*"Sixteen of these diesel rail cars are being built for British Railways, at a cost of about £500,000," says the Railway Executive. "The experimental ones in the photograph are still running in Scotland. The first of the new cars should appear next year in the West Riding of Yorkshire."*

**Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.**

# Be prepared




But if there's nothing organically wrong, why do I even wake tired after a long night's sleep?
Resting the body isn't enough, Mr. Foster. Our brain... our nerves... our entire person, must have rest and peace at night. We must have complete relaxation so sleep can reach down to our subconscious mind. Only then can we be truly restored at night and wake refreshed and confident. I recommend Horlicks every night...

Look, Sir! A boat in trouble!
Right! Alec and George, you've got life-saving badges, swim out with me. You two make stretchers, the rest of you start a fire

(THINKS) No tiredness now—thanks to Horlicks
... a splendid example of a patrol in action, well trained and well led. You chaps, and Mr. Foster, can be proud of yourselves

**"IF ONLY I COULD HAVE SEEN MYSELF ASLEEP"**

I love scouting and I've always been pretty good at it, except for that rocky patch I struck a little while back.

I was always so *tired*, woke up tired, even after 8 or 9 hours' sleep. I just couldn't manage anything worthwhile.

Then the chief sent me to the M.O.—and he told me that if I saw myself asleep, I'd have seen by the tense and worried look on my face that my sleep wasn't right! It's not enough just to rest our bodies, he said—our entire personality must rest; we must get *complete* relaxation while we sleep.

He put me on to Horlicks, and, by Jove, it made a difference. I'm on top of the world now.

**HORLICKS** *RESTORES YOU BY NIGHT*

# . . say Bulmer's for cider

Superior quality . . .
Perfect blending . . .
Real value . . . make
BULMER'S the most
popular cider of all.

H. P. BULMER & CO. LTD.,
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# Dog lovers need to know these facts!

Look at your Dog's powerful jaws and magnificent teeth, designed to crush and grind his food. Would you say he needs a soft diet of table scraps and "mushy" foods *or the good "hard-tack" diet that Spratt's Biscuit Dog Foods provide?*

Spratt's Biscuit Dog Foods are highly concentrated, energy-giving nourishment — the appetising, satisfying "hard-tack" feed that Experts agree is essential to a Dog's needs.

**ONE DOG EXPERT'S TESTIMONY:**

**Brian Vesey-Fitzgerald,** the well-known writer on Dogs, says :—

*"A Dog has not the same digestive system as a man. Its stomach . . . is adapted for taking highly concentrated food . . . a succession of tit-bits really is not much use to a Dog. Puppies, no less than grown Dogs, need concentrated food . . . as soon as the teeth begin to come through give them biscuits . . . A good dry biscuit should always be available".*

*('News of the World' March 8th and 22nd)*

The wide range of Spratt's Biscuit Dog Foods caters for the needs and tastes of all Dogs of all breeds, from weaning to maturity. *To learn fully how to care for your Dog, obtain Spratt's famous book, "Guide to Dog Management", 1/6d. from Spratt's stockists or 1/8d. post free from Dept. J.B. at the address below.*

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PUPPY BISCUITS · DOG CAKES

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**The Perfect Chocolate-Toffee in the Perfect Pocket Pack**

JOHN MACKINTOSH & SONS LIMITED, HALIFAX

20 for 3/7

*First class quality*

# 'THREE THREES'

CIGARETTES

*made by State Express*

"Gordon, why ever did you do it?" Something about her voice made me sit up. I saw she was crying. "There's no need for you to go," she said

# Girl on the island

*by LIONEL DAVIDSON*

She was seventeen, either hauntingly lovely or bony and treacherous —it depended on your age. I was only fifteen then, and I hated her

I HAD A LUNCH appointment that day with a man called Malindine who wanted to buy motor bicycles. I make motor bicycles. If we'd kept the appointment, I suppose I would either have sold him motor bicycles or I wouldn't. But there was one thing I would never have done. I would not have found out what happened to Eileen's dinner that day in 1913.

It was funny. I was not thinking of Eileen. I had not thought of her for years. Every waking moment the past week I had thought of Malindine and his order, and the four-day week my men were working at the factory. I've been in business long enough not to pin my hopes on a single gusher, but I don't know, the last few months with orders dropping, the export market drying up, I'd got myself in a state of nerves. I remember thinking, one day, walking round the building: I built all this, the factory, the offices, the showrooms. Quickly, incredibly, a young man's touch had raised it: just as quickly, an older man's failing grip could let it fall apart.

That day of the Malindine lunch I was keyed up, irritable, snappy to poor Miss Marks. Miss Marks has been with me twenty years, and in all that time I've never known her answer back. I think she has a cat at home to love, and maybe she loves me, as faithful secretaries are supposed to; but she has never given me an inkling of her private life or her private thoughts.

At half past eleven she came in, and her sad eyes were disturbed. "Mr. Malindine's secretary has just phoned, Mr. Fraser. He can't keep the appointment today."

"Can't keep—has he been taken ill?"

Miss Marks's sorrowful eyes looked down. "I don't think so—at least—she said an urgent matter had come up."

An urgent matter? More urgent than mine? On the day of the appointment? *What is it?* I thought. *Was I too eager? Am I losing my grip?*

Miss Marks's eyes met mine. "Shall I cancel the table, Mr. Fraser?"

"Cancel it," I said harshly, and she went, and I sat there in a rage at myself, not at Malindine, but at myself, that he could act like that to me.

I suppose that lasted for a few minutes, and

*ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS*

I jerked my arm free and caught her wrist. For a moment she was too startled to do anything

then I went into top gear, rousing the selling side, distribution, works, service, the whole caboodle, to convince myself I'd still got an organization that worked. I had poor Miss Marks running three ways at once.

It was like that until half past two, with half my executives milling round me. Then there was a respite, and I suddenly realized I was hungry, and for the first time in years I told Miss Marks to order me sandwiches in my office.

"Will you be working all afternoon, Mr. Fraser?"

"Certainly." There was an expression on her face I couldn't place—surprise, shock even. "I can still do an afternoon's work." And then it occurred to me.

"But you've eaten nothing yourself, Miss Marks. I'm sorry. You have something, too."

There was a little hesitation. "Thank you, Mr. Fraser."

She brought me in the sandwiches herself, and less than half a minute later I buzzed for her for some papers from the confidential file. She was usually in on roller skates and when she didn't appear I got up and looked in at her office. She was not there.

I went to the file myself for the papers. It was locked and I couldn't find my key, but Miss Marks had a duplicate key in a secret little place. I opened the file and found the papers and locked it again, and then I went back to my room and sat down and reached for a sandwich.

The sandwiches had gone.

I put down the papers and for a moment I was more bewildered, more affronted than I had been all morning. The tray was there with a cup of coffee and a plate and a few crumbs; that was all.

I thought: *Have I eaten the sandwiches and forgotten?* But I knew I had not eaten the sandwiches. They were of smoked roe. I liked smoked roe. There was no taste of smoked roe in my mouth. And then suddenly—I don't know which brought it to me first, the memory of the roe coming back over the years, or the small movement—then, suddenly, I knew what had happened to my sandwiches. And I knew, beyond a doubt, what had happened to Eileen's dinner all those years ago on the Scotch island of Quist. . . .

She was seventeen then, a slim, dark girl, either hauntingly lovely in a witch-like way, or bony and treacherous, depending on your age. I was fifteen and I hated her. She was my cousin. My parents had died the year before in an influenza epidemic in Glasgow, and Uncle Donal and Aunt Dora and Eileen were my only relatives.

I hated Eileen and my Aunt Dora and the farm, in that order—but almost more than all of them put together, I hated the tacit assumption that I should spend the rest of my life there, taking over the place from Uncle Donal. "There's always been a Fraser on Quist," he would say often. "Always has been, always will be."

I never answered that. I didn't have to. He didn't expect an answer, and Eileen could read my thoughts. I was scared to death of her.

The trouble with her had started after I'd been there only a couple of days. I slept on a couch in the living-room—there were only two bedrooms—and she had come in in a flannel dressing gown and sat down to warm herself at the dying fire.

"Are you feeling lonely, Gordon?" she asked.

The unaccustomed softness and friendship in her voice nearly made me cry, but I took a grip on myself. "A bit," I said.

"It will be strange to you at first," she said, again in that soft tone. "Tell me about Glasgow."

I began to tell her, a little hesitantly, thinking she was only being polite, but her questions showed so much curiosity, so much hunger for knowledge, that soon I was going on at a great rate and she was quiet, listening, in the glowing darkness.

At the end, when it was late and I was yawning, she said suddenly: "And you wish you were back there?"

I didn't know how to answer that. "Sometimes, maybe."

She got up. "You don't have to stay if you don't want. You've got a high opinion of yourself and your precious Glasgow." She went out quickly, leaving me with my mouth open.

It was like that all the time. I learnt, of course, to look for traps, but she was extraordinarily skilful. She had a cat called Wullie that followed her everywhere, and she used to talk to this cat about me, in my hearing, and the cat seemed to understand. It was an ugly, ginger old devil, and it would defy me, standing in my path, hissing. But sometimes, maybe to confuse me, Eileen could be charming for hours, even days on end. It was difficult to know when she would stop being charming and start being spiteful again.

I was small and thin when I went there, and she took delight in getting me to reach for things that were too high or to carry things that were too heavy.

"You'll need to grow, ma wee mannie," she would say; or, "Who's pinched your muscles?"

And she loved to catch my wrists and hold me, struggling.

But in the spring I was out with my Uncle Donal in the boat, hauling in the nets; and in

*Continued on page 32*

Hobley's debonair calm vanishes as one of Tommy Cooper's tricks misfires at a television party. Viewers often wonder what Mac will undergo next

With years of repertory experience, Hobley gets leading roles in B.B.C. staff shows. As the Demon King, he towers over Diana Davis

# Mac's horseplay puts a kick in TV

*by NORMAN PHILLIPS*

**Dapper McDonald Hobley is TV's senior announcer, and its amiable clown. He once made a striking entry as a Chinaman—in a basket**

ARTHUR ASKEY CUDGELLED his brains. He needed a guest artist for part of his next TV show—a burlesque on *The Prisoner of Zenda*. The visitor would be Rupert of Hentzau or, in the Askey version, Rupert of Hounslow. He would have to be a well-known figure for, as an added laugh-raiser, Askey had adopted the catchline, "I'm sure I've seen that chap's face somewhere before."

Several film stars were suggested and rejected before Askey rose from his chair and banged the table. "I've got it!" he declared. "We'll use McDonald Hobley."

Decked out in Ruritanian robes, McDonald Hobley, the sartorially elegant senior television announcer, duly made an unannounced appearance as Rupert of Hounslow. His lean features were, of course, immediately recognized by several million viewers, each of whom may have laughed just a little louder each time Askey muttered, "I'm sure I've seen his face somewhere before."

It is to the credit of the usually staid B.B.C. chiefs that they permit Hobley (rhymes with nobly, not knobbly) an occasional bit of horseplay like this caper with Arthur Askey, or the *Kaleidoscope* appearances in which the dignified announcer has masqueraded as Napoleon and a Mexican peasant. The gesture is not entirely disinterested. Although the B.B.C. has made Hobley's ingratiating smile familiar to more than ten million viewers, the corporation limits its pay for the job to £1,016 a year.

One sequel of the Zenda burlesque with Askey was a sheaf of offers from theatrical managers anxious to offer Hobley several times his B.B.C. salary if he would return to the stage. For several years now Hobley has faced the dilemma of remaining with the B.B.C. at a modest fee or gambling on a stage career. An amiable fellow—"slaphappy in a nice way," says one of his friends—he wavers between loyalty to the B.B.C. and a natural desire to cash in on his popularity.

At thirty-six, the eleven stone, five foot eleven inch announcer is a familiar figure to Britain's 2,300,000 TV set owners, many of whom do not hesitate to presume on the fact that they recognize his face. Not long ago, while he was walking down Finchley Road in London, the driver of a Number 2 bus hailed him with a cheerful, "Hey, Mac, come over and give us an autograph." Although a waiting line of car drivers hooted, the busman refused to move until Hobley had signed his name on a scrap of paper.

Possibly because of his background—he is the son of a clergyman—Hobley's modesty has not been overwhelmed by his fan mail (three hundred a week) or by the fact that he is frequently recognized in public. Far from causing any swelling of the head, these incidents have provided Hobley with stories to tell against himself.

"I was sitting in the London Underground with a friend," Hobley likes to relate. "There were two women opposite us, and I felt sure they were discussing me. I was so sure that I told my friend I would be signing autographs before the next stop was reached. Eventually one of the women came over and spoke to me. 'Please forgive me,' she said, 'but we can't agree who you are. You *are* Mr. Beverley Nichols, aren't you?'"

The Hobley family were stationed in the Falkland Islands when their son Denys Jack Valentine McDonald was born, and two years

**"I don't want to be a fashion plate," insists Hobley, but the dinner jacket he wears to interview Marion Cooper has cuffs on the sleeves. When his tie becomes crooked, hundreds phone to tell him**

later the boy's father opened an English preparatory school in Chile, six hundred feet up in the foothills of the Andes.

At Brighton College, Hobley shone at cricket, rugger and fencing. He still prides himself on his swordsmanship, though Arthur Askey maintains that at the end of their TV duel Hobley was soaked with perspiration, while his own pulse rate was almost normal.

It was 1936 when Hobley finished school. Undecided about his future, he applied for an R.A.F. short service commission. While on the way to post the necessary forms, Hobley met the postman. "Anything for me, Charlie?" he asked, and was handed a letter from Peter Hall of the Theatre Royal, Brighton. Without her son's knowledge, Mrs. Hobley had written to Hall asking him to give the boy an audition. Hall's letter set a definite audition time. No thought that he might not get the job entered young Hobley's head. He tore up his R.A.F. forms and decided to become an actor.

Hobley got the job, and spent the prewar years accumulating repertory experience. In November, 1939, the young actor changed rôles to become a gunner in the Royal Artillery. Eventually, he was commissioned in time to sail for Singapore. The Japanese conquest of Malaya caused the convoy to be diverted and Hobley's unit was put ashore at Colombo for the defence of Ceylon.

### Broadcast For Radio Seac

Towards the end of the war Hobley left his regiment for a post on Mountbatten's staff and, when Radio Seac was formed, the artillery captain became news reader, announcer and general filler-in. It was during this period that he met a fellow officer, James Hartley, who asked him about postwar plans. "Have you ever thought of television?" asked Hartley.

"No," said Hobley, "but the only thing that would interest me there would be a TV announcer's job. And they'll all be filled before I get out of the army."

He was demobilized in 1946. One Sunday morning, while his father was at church and McDonald lay in bed, he was roused by the arrival of a telegram addressed to the Rev. McDonald Hobley. It was a message from Hartley, who had rejoined the B.B.C. "HAVE YOU ANY INFORMATION WHEREABOUTS OF YOUR SON," the telegram read. "WOULD HE BE AVAILABLE FOR AUDITION AS TELEVISION ANNOUNCER."

Hartley, without knowing where Hobley was, had entered his name as a candidate for TV announcer just before the list was closed. Hobley, who frequently inspires gestures like this from his friends, hastened to take advantage of the situation. At the time his prospects were limited to a single Sunday performance in an ex-serviceman's production at the Vaudeville Theatre. His wardrobe consisted of his uniform and demob suit.

Feeling that he would cut a better figure in his captain's uniform, Hobley polished his buttons and reported for the audition. There were more than one hundred other applicants. The spruce, tanned captain was firmly told to go home and return in civilian clothes in case his uniform influenced the judges.

Six trials were needed to reduce the list. Applicants had to read scripts, conduct interviews and run up a spiral staircase to test poise when winded. On his way to the studio for one audition, Hobley glanced through a magazine containing a detailed account of Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet. As soon as he arrived at the B.B.C. he learned that the day's test before the cameras called for three minutes "ad libbing" about an imaginary Russian ballet programme the following evening. Ballet is not Hobley's strongest point, but memory is, and he drew on his recollection of the article. While his rivals struggled to improvise their talks, Hobley calmly reeled off a description of the Bolshoi company, tossed in several Russian names and ended with a synopsis of the imaginary programme. Soon after, he was told that he had won the competition.

As senior TV announcer, Hobley shares a room at Alexandra Palace. On the three drawers to the dressing-table are scratched "Mac," "Mary" and "Sylvia," the three announcers—the others being Mary Malcolm and Sylvia Peters. The three share most of the straight announcing duties on a roster that requires them to work two or three days each week. In addition they may be called on for commentaries, interviews, or to compère shows.

Normally, Hobley does not study his lines until a few minutes before going in front of a camera. His repertory training gave him the facility to memorize quickly, and on one occasion he committed to memory in four minutes an announcement that covered an entire sheet of foolscap.

### He Forgot Star's Name

Once Hobley's memory did fail him—with embarrassing results. Called on to present a cabaret artist, he was handed a script beginning, "I have pleasure in introducing someone who needs no introduction. . . ." The announcer went right through the trite phrases until he reached the point where the star's name appeared. Then Hobley's mind went blank. He was sitting on the script and, rather than consult it, he began all over again, hoping that the missing name would come to him. It didn't. Finally, the guest artist piped up. "That's all right, Mr. Hobley," said Sylvie St. Clair, "I will tell them who I am."

Daytime announcements are usually made standing before the camera. In the evenings Hobley sits at a table, which is more restful but results in considerable wear to the elbows of his suits and the cuffs of his dinner jackets.

Cartoonists have depicted Hobley at the table, dressed impeccably from the waist up but wearing flannels and brown boots. "I sometimes do dress that way," he admits candidly, "but only when I am sure there will be no visitors in the studios. After all, who uses a butter knife when dining alone?"

Hobley selects his clothes carefully. The B.B.C. helps to finance his wardrobe, which includes six beige dress shirts which do not reflect light as would the customary white shirts.

### Ornament To Tailoring

Hobley maintains that he does not want to be a fashion plate, but he does indulge in such novelties as cuffs on his dinner-jacket sleeves and collars on some of his waistcoats. This brings down on him some leg-pulling from more conservatively minded colleagues like Ronald Waldman. However, John Taylor, editor of *The Tailor And Cutter*, has ruled that Hobley is always perfectly correct in his taste and "an ornament to British tailoring."

Some viewers eye Hobley's appearance closely and, if his tie gets crooked or his collar protrudes over his lapels, they will telephone the B.B.C. This sometimes ruffles Hobley, and one evening he began his weather announcement by saying: "There have been one or two calls from viewers to say that the points of my collar protrude over my lapels, and I should like to apologize for this. And now, in spite of the fact that my tie might be crooked, I shall proceed with the weather forecast."

As veteran viewers can recall, the obliging Hobley is less likely to attack an audience than he is to knock himself out for their entertainment. Early in his TV career he volunteered as the subject in a wrestling series, and also submitted to being draped with a python during a zoo programme. Nowadays, Hobley is more apt to escape from routine by popping up in outlandish outfits in shows like *Kaleidoscope*.

"Because Mac is a B.B.C. announcer, we have to be careful how we use him," says *Kaleidoscope's* producer, Ronald Waldman. Fortunately for Hobley, Waldman's interpretation of "careful" is sometimes stretched to the limit.

Once he had the announcer carried before the cameras wearing Chinese costume and hidden inside a laundry basket. Hobley rose to the occasion. Instead of the usual formal closing announcement, he shook his pigtail, grinned and said gaily: "Climb to glo home." THE END

The fires were well alight now. Ivens switched off the engine and they peered upwards. Somewhere, above the smoke and mist, was the lost plane

# BLOOD IS THE FEE

*by ROY MACNAB*

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES WOOD

**To bring rain, one needed blood—fresh blood. The witch-doctor knew that; the white men had yet to learn**

AT THE EDGE of the tarmac strip, McDermott, the chief tobacco officer, waited for the station-wagon to pick him up. He was a short, square man sheltering under the gigantic rim of a rodeo hat he had picked up at the coast years ago. But not even a rodeo hat could keep off the blistering sun. There was no shade anywhere. The bulldozers had seen to that, flattening out everything that looked like a tree in the race to get the strip down in time. Even now it wasn't ready. Most of the morning he had been with the gang, urging them to get it finished.

Now as the line of native labourers broke off for the midday meal, McDermott wiped the sweat out of his eyes and swore at the delay that kept him waiting in the sun. What the devil was the youngster doing with the car?

There was no air in the valley. No breeze came in to stir the rows of drooping tobacco plant on either side of him. The small, only partly grown leaves waited listlessly for water that never came. This was the second bad year, the second year without rain. If the crop failed this time they would never try again.

McDermott watched a cloud of dust come down the track, gathering size as a snowball gathers snow. As it came nearer he recognized the station-wagon. It pulled up beside him and a young man threw open the door.

"Look here, Ivens," McDermott exploded, "what the devil do you mean by keeping me waiting out here in this perishing sun?"

"I'm sorry, Mac," said Ivens. "Carburetter again. Can't keep it clean with all this dust flying around. I've got some mail under the seat. There's an official letter from the Department."

McDermott picked it out of the bag and ripped it open. He grunted and his jaw set firmly.

"They want the strip ready for next week. These Yankee rainmakers are itching to get started. Apparently their met. officer predicts a cloud belt in about ten days. I must say, Ivens, I think this scientific rainmaking's a lot of ballyhoo. It's never been proved, anyway."

"They've done quite well with it in the States," said Ivens. "I can't remember how many acres of tobacco they've saved but it's something phenomenal."

"Anything the Yanks do is phenomenal," grunted McDermott.

THE car stopped outside the station office, which was also the living-quarters of the station staff. McDermott, carrying the mail-bag, went indoors, flinging his hat on to a peg on the far wall as he entered.

"Mtembe," he bellowed, and when there was no answer he bellowed again. "Where the hell's that black devil now?"

"Probably out in the yard," said Ivens.

"Well, get him in here with something to eat and drink. Tell him to bring a bucket of iced water." McDermott opened the cupboard and took out the whisky bottle. He held it up to the light. It was nearly empty.

"Better order some more whisky, Ivens. This is the last bottle."

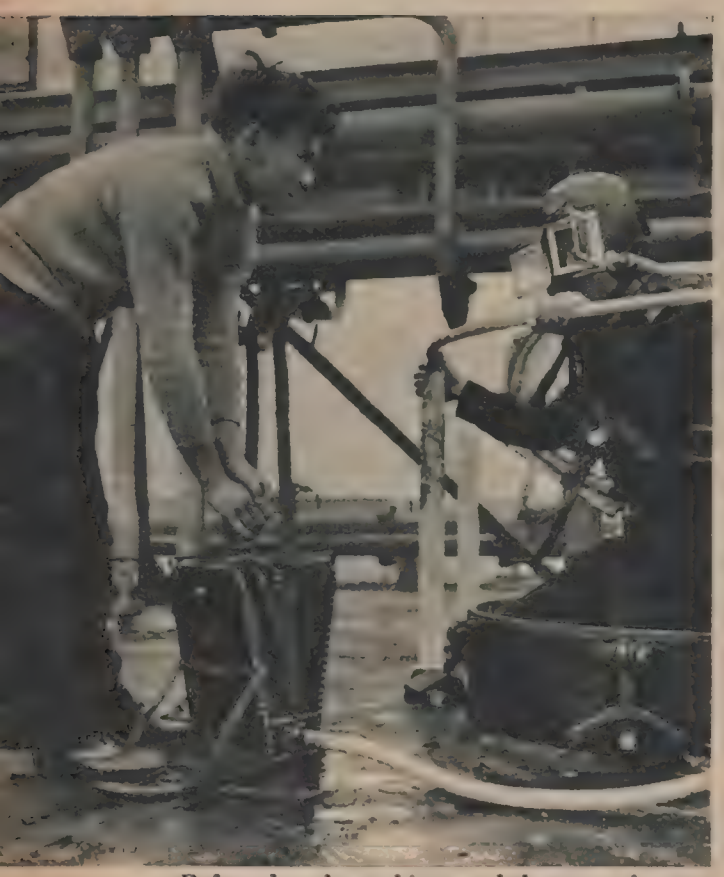
McDermott never drank in the middle of the day, but now he was tired and worried and he

*Continued on page 34*

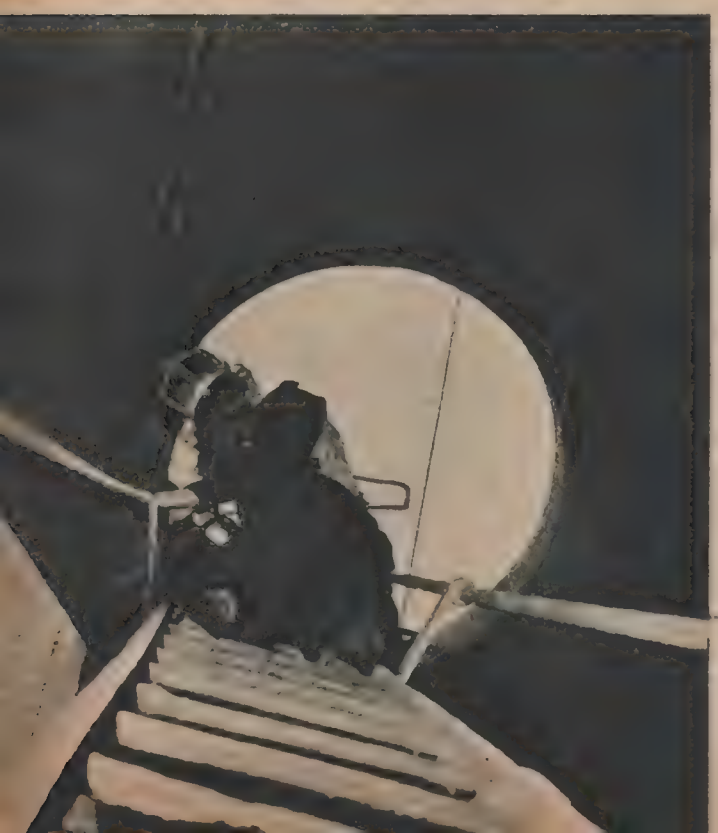
# Captain Milligan's tanker sails to meet the unexpected

*by KEITH ELLIS*

**"Anything can happen to a tanker," says the captain after a lifetime at sea. His ship is a shuttlecock in the race to deliver oil. But there's a compensation: wives can join the crew**



Before he closes his gas helmet to inspect the tanks below decks, Michael d'Oyly gives George Dell the order to start the air pump



Wearing a life-jacket with line attached, d'Oyly goes down into the hold. Inspection and sampling need care; different fuels must never be mixed

LAST NOVEMBER, a Shell tanker called the Nacella lay off Singapore, waiting for her next assignment. The atmosphere was tense; the men hoped to spend Christmas at home in Britain, but, knowing the unpredictability of tanker movements, they realized that their next voyage might take them to Japan, Borneo or even Australia. Then came the orders. The Nacella was to sail to Japan via Mirri, an oil port in Borneo, and then back to Singapore. By the time they returned, Christmas would be past and gone.

The men were noticeably depressed. Even the captain was feeling downcast as he gave out the pay next day. Halfway through the parade, however, the radio officer brought in a message. "Take on stores, water and bunkers for United Kingdom," it read. "Previous orders cancelled." With miraculous speed, all the jobs necessary for getting under way were accomplished, and the tanker steamed into the Malacca Straits.

A few hours later, the captain was resting in his cabin when the radio officer disturbed him with another signal: "Cancel previous orders and proceed to Mirri. If you run short of stores on the return journey, put in at Manila." The captain was dumbfounded, but he gave the necessary orders and changed course. Assuredly, he would not be home for Christmas after all.

He had barely returned to his cabin when the wireless officer came in with yet another message, this time in plain language. "Disregard last message," it read. "My apologies. It was sent to you instead of Navicella." Once more the ship changed course. Three weeks later it docked at Shellhaven in the Thames, and the men were paid off. Only when they were on the train home, however, were they certain of their Christmas leave.

Although the second diversion seemed most unlikely, the captain knew that with a tanker anything is possible. At best, tankers move in a highly complicated pattern which cannot always be understood by those who work in them.

### Complicated Movements

Even with the most routine movements, the unexpected is likely to happen. Captain Charles Milligan, of the tanker Lampania, recently put in at Stanlow with a cargo of waxy distillate from Shellhaven. Since he had made several similar trips over the past few weeks, it seemed likely that he would be sent straight back to Shellhaven. Instead, the Lampania was ordered to the Cape Verde Isles and from there to Curaçao in the Dutch West Indies. Milligan showed not the slightest surprise; he has spent a lifetime in tankers, fourteen years of it with Shell. A forty-three year old Northern Irishman with a full head of iron-grey hair, and a round, cheerful face which bears a strong resemblance to Aneurin Bevan's, Milligan is short and sturdily built. His weight fluctuates between fifteen stone and thirteen stone four pounds, according to whether he has recently cut starch out of his diet. Since the war, he has traded at ports as distant as Freetown and Melbourne, Abadan and Stockholm.

Collectively, oil cargoes are the most valuable in the world. Every day, something like eleven million tons of oil products worth about £60,000,000 are at sea. Without them, almost every machine used by men—from lawn-mowers to jetplanes, from sewing machines to battleships—would be useless. To satisfy the vast and growing demand for oil, the world's tanker fleets are now forty per cent bigger than they were at the end of the war, and nine times the size they were in 1919.

Although the Lampania has a cargo capacity of nine thousand tons, Milligan rarely sees any oil. "It's pumped into the ship and pumped out again," he explains, "and all we see are the pipes." Apart from taking samples, the only time he ever saw his cargo was at Thameshaven early in the war.

### Oil Sprayed The Ship

"We were pumping heavy fuel oil out of the ship," he recalls, "when someone shut off the valve ashore. Not knowing what had happened, we continued pumping. Suddenly, the hose burst and shot a jet of black oil right over the bridge to the pump-room at the stern. I was mate at the time and proud of my beautiful woodwork. After that, we just couldn't scrub it clean."

It is not only fuel oil that tankers carry. In the early 1900s, they frequently returned from the Far East with cargoes of rice, and during the second World War they even carried grain across the Atlantic. From time to time, they take gas oil to the fishing fleets off Iceland and, each year, two tankers are released to collect whale oil from the Falklands. Curaçao is perpetually short of water; when a tanker is ordered there in ballast, her master takes fresh water from the Seine, Plate or other convenient river, which is later purified and pumped into the island's water supply.

When Milligan reported back off leave a year ago, the Lampania, to which he had been posted, was lying at Stockholm. He was flown out to take her over. To keep a nine thousand ton tanker in port for one day costs £700. Hence, every effort is made to keep ships moving. An average-sized ship expects to turn round in two or three days when discharging, and in only twenty-four hours in a loading port.

Some time ago, a tanker broke her propeller shaft in the middle of the Indian Ocean and had

At meals, Captain Milligan heads the table. On his left: Mrs. Milligan and First Officer Graham. On his right: Chief Engineer Embleton and his wife, and Chief Steward and Mrs. Dickson

On the bridge, Captain Milligan (right) chats to First Officer Graham. In the hold are tons of oil

to be towed to Bombay. The spare shaft which she normally carried was ashore for reconditioning, and her master radioed headquarters for a replacement. Harold Stredwick, of the marine stores department in London, immediately ordered another shaft from the manufacturers in Fifeshire. Then he chartered a freight plane and from the shaft's blueprint had a twenty-foot cradle designed for suspending it under the fuselage. Twenty-four hours later, the shaft arrived at the airport, where the plane was waiting. Three days later it arrived at Bombay. "The charter cost us fifteen hundred pounds," says Stredwick, "but it was worth it. A passenger ship would have taken four weeks."

## "Admiralty" In London

Fleet headquarters at Ibex House, in the City of London, is necessarily something of an admiralty. Tankers have to be manned, victualled and stored. New ships have to be planned and their construction supervised. Every month, twenty-five thousand letters are redirected to crews. The most complex task of all, however, is the deployment of the fleet so that oil from more than forty different loading points arrives on time at more than a hundred terminals in thirty-odd countries.

"The guiding principle is to take oil from the nearest available source," says Edward Oldham, head of the shipping division of the distribution and supplies department. "We have to keep ships loaded as frequently as possible and in ballast as little as possible."

When Milligan is carrying a mixed cargo of different kinds of fuel, he has to be particularly careful that there is no contamination between the different grades when he is pumping or taking samples. With some products, he must also see that no water leaks into the tanks. A single bucket of water in a five hundred-ton tank of lubricating oil makes it cloudy and unsaleable.

With bitumen, the effect is more spectacular. One bitumen carrier was tied up at Hamburg when a rumbling started in the tanks. The master and the chief engineer went to investigate. After one glance through an inspection plug hole, the chief yelled "Look out!" and ran. Seconds later, a fifty-foot jet of scalding bitumen geysered into the air and sprayed the deck. "Fortunately, we all managed to get clear," says the captain. "Bitumen is carried at 270 degrees Fahrenheit and, at that temperature, water causes it to boil up. Later, we found we had a leaking rivet."

Water, however, never mixes with aviation fuel. Hence, when loading pumps and pipes are primed with water, this is first pumped into the tanker, and the fuel follows. During the war, the captain of one tanker—not belonging to Shell—was told to "oil" the Illustrious at a rendezvous in mid-Pacific. He had never before fuelled a ship at sea and, knowing that the Illustrious was at that time commanded by a somewhat irascible captain, he practised the operation with his escorting destroyers. By the time they reached the rendezvous, he was an expert. The Illustrious came alongside, the pipes were connected and the fuelling finished in record time.

That night, the Illustrious sent a signal: "Finest oiling ever accomplished. Heartiest congratulations." A little later, however, a second message scorched the air: "Please explain why we got sixty tons of water." The tanker captain had forgotten that at the bottom of his aviation fuel tank was the water sucked in from the pipes.

A week later, the same captain returned to the rendezvous to oil the Formidable. He was confident of not making the same mistake, for he was still carrying the remains of his first cargo of aviation fuel and the water had already been sucked out. The Formidable steamed alongside. The tanker had his pipes ready, but there was no sign of the connecting pipe on the warship. "Start pumping," came the signal. The tanker captain sent back: "But you haven't connected up yet." There was a brief pause. Then: "Ha! Ha!" signalled Formidable, "you're not catching us like you caught the Illustrious. Get those pumps working." For twenty minutes, tons of high-grade aviation spirit spouted into the Pacific Ocean. Only then would the Formidable connect its lines.

## Strict Safety Rules

Like every tanker-man, Milligan gives the lie to the popular idea that tankers are dangerous ships to sail in. "There's no danger," he insists, provided you take precautions."

There are two kinds of oil, with high and low flashpoints. High-flash oils present no problem. Unless they are first heated to 150 degrees Fahrenheit, it is impossible to ignite them, even with a lighted match. Low-flash oils are a different matter. Kuwait crude, which comprises seventy per cent of the oil brought into Britain, can be ignited at freezing-point by a single spark. With these low-flash oils, therefore, rigid

*Continued on page 29*

In the cold wind they stood together by the Ceres. The luggage and most of the passengers had arrived. Now they were waiting only for the Royal car

# IN THE WET

## *by NEVIL SHUTE*

**The aircraft was in danger: he was certain of it. He had left nothing to chance, and yet—every instinct warned him that something was wrong**

THE WET: that was when the rains came to Northern Queensland, drumming on the roof of the shack where an old man lay dying. He smoked opium to ease his pain—and had a fantastic dream. He dreamt he was "Nigger" Anderson, an Australian airman—of the future. . . .

In the year 1983, Nigger joined the Queen's Flight in England as a pilot. His job was to fly the Queen and her staff to Australia and Canada, on State visits. He knew that there was a constitutional crisis in Britain—and that the present government was making things increasingly difficult for the Royal Family.

Nigger was in love with Rosemary Long, a secretary at Buckingham Palace. Rosemary knew much more than she had dared to tell him, but it wasn't hard to guess that matters were coming to a head.

A few days before Christmas, Prince Charles had taken his family to Canada; David himself had flown Princess Anne and her children to Kenya, and was standing by for yet another long-range flight. And now Field-Marshal Sir Thomas Forrest, Governor-General of Canada, had come to London—no one knew why.

The country seethed with rumours. As Christmas Day approached, the whole British Commonwealth waited on tenterhooks for the Queen's broadcast. It was rumoured that she would make a very grave announcement.

### PART 8
*Days of Tension*

ON the Wednesday David began to be troubled by reporters, asking if he had any statement to make about future journeys. He said he hadn't, and referred his visitors to the Queen's private secretary, but when he went out to get his car from the garage to drive to the aerodrome at White Waltham a photographer was waiting and took pictures of him as he walked down the pavement.

He rang up Rosemary that day, and dined with her at Mario's in Shepherd Market in the evening. He found her looking white and exhausted, and decided at first sight of her to cut the dinner short and take her back to the flat directly they had dined. Because of her evident fatigue and strain he did not broach the subject of their job, but talked to her about boats and cruising grounds around the coast of England most of the time.

She said once, "I went home last night, just for a few hours."

He was surprised, for it was the middle of the week. "To Oxford?"

She nodded. "I shan't be able to get down

*ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY SEABRIGHT*

there next weekend, or for some time after that."

He thought for a minute, and then said, "Will we be together?"

She smiled at him. "I think so."

He smiled back at her. "Well, that's all right. Things might be a lot worse."

They talked about other things, and presently she said, "Where will you be on Friday, Nigger?"

"At White Waltham," he replied. "I don't know that I'll be anywhere else."

She said, "My father's coming up on Friday. I would like you to meet him, and there may not be another chance."

"I want to meet him. What's he coming up for?"

"He's got a meeting with Tom Forrest on Friday. I think he's lunching with him at the Athenaeum."

"Does your father know Tom Forrest?"

"Daddy's met him once or twice. But he wants to meet Daddy now. Daddy's Professor of Political Economy, you know."

"I see." Wheels within wheels; was Rosemary's father mixed up in the English crisis? No business of his, however. "It's going to be difficult for me to get up here on Friday," he said, biting his lip. "I told Ryder he could have Friday evening off to go and see some friends in Hampstead. We can't both be up in London at the same time." He paused. "When's your father going back?"

"He's got to get back to Oxford on Friday night."

For a minute the pilot sat in brooding thought. "I can't make it," he said at last. "I'm sorry, Rosemary. I'll have to be at home on Friday night, sitting at the telephone. I can't risk not being there if any orders come, with Ryder out that night."

"Of course not, Nigger." She paused, and then she said, "If I came down with Daddy by train to Maidenhead, could we have dinner in your flat?"

"Of course," he said. "Could you get off for that?"

"I think so," she replied. "I do want you to meet him before we go."

He did not care to pick her up upon her indiscretion. "I could get one of the boys to drive him on to Oxford in my car after dinner," he said, "and bring the car back. He could drive you to the station, too, to get a train back here. But it's an awful bind for you, at such a time as this."

"I'd like to do it," she replied. "It'd make a bit of a change."

He took her back to her flat after dinner, and helped her out of the small car on to the pavement in Dover Street. She asked if he would like to come up for a little, but she was obviously tired, and he refused.

He kissed her in the darkness of the doorway and said good night, and she opened the door with her latch-key.

"Good night, Nigger darling."

"Good night, Rosemary. Sleep tight."

The uneasy days went by, and at ten minutes to seven on Friday night David stood in the cold, windy darkness upon the platform of Maidenhead station, waiting for the electric train from Paddington. It came in with a glow of lights and a sighing of pneumatic brakes, and he stood by the ticket collector watching for Rosemary with her father. She was not there, but an elderly man in an old raincoat and a battered felt hat stopped by him. "It's Wing Commander Anderson?"

He glanced sharply at the man, and saw her features in his face.

"That's right," he said. "Are you Professor Long?"

"That's right. Rosemary said I was to tell you that she's got to go back to the Palace tonight. So I thought I'd better come and meet you anyway. We might not have another chance for some time."

David's wrists were aching. If the bomb went off now. . . . At last, the engineer lifted the plate

David guided him to the car. As they drove the short distance to his flat he said, "I'm sorry she's got to work tonight. She's working much too hard."

"Ah, well," her father said. "It's not much longer now."

The pilot did not answer that.

In the flat he gave Professor Long a glass of sherry, and with his own tomato cocktail in his hand he turned to face him. "In a way, I'm glad you've come alone this evening," he said. "We'll probably be able to talk more freely. Did Rosemary tell you that we want to get married?"

The older man smiled. "She did say something about it."

The pilot said directly, "Did she tell you that I'm not pure white? That I'm a quadroon?"

"She did."

"What do you think about that, sir?"

The professor shrugged his shoulders. "I've got a lot of more important things to think about than that. To start with, have you ever been married before?"

"No. I never came within a mile of it. It's not so easy when you've got a touch of colour."

The other smiled. "You've started on the awkward subjects, so we may as well clear the decks of all of them." He asked two further questions and the pilot grinned, and answered them. "Well, that just leaves the colour. I think that's Rosemary's affair and nobody else's."

"You wouldn't mind about it very much, yourself? I'd rather know now if you take a strong view about boongs?"

"Boongs?"

"Coloured people. It's a word we use up in North Queensland, where I come from."

"I see. I think the view I take is this: if you're regarded as suitable to serve the Queen as intimately as you do, you're suitable to be my son-in-law, if Rosemary wants to marry you. That covers it so far as I'm concerned."

David had got Jim Hansen, the Australian steward from Tare, to come in and serve the

dinner; he sat down with Rosemary's father to a dinner of clear soup, English chicken, Australian ham, and a fruit salad of mangoes and paw-paw and fresh apricots from Kenya served with cream and sugar. Sitting over coffee at the conclusion of the meal, when the steward had left the room, the older man said, "You've had no orders yet?"

The pilot shook his head.

"I think I'd better tell you what I told Rosemary this afternoon," her father said. "These are difficult times, and she's mixed up in great affairs. I told her that if she finds herself in some far country where she feels she has to stay for months, or even for years, and if she wants to marry while she's out there, she mustn't let thoughts of her mother and myself stand in her way. Naturally, we should like to see her married. But if that's not possible, she mustn't hold up anything on our account. Rosemary's got her own life to lead, and if she wants to marry while she's out there, she'll have our blessing."

David said, "It's very good of you to take that line about it, sir."

Professor Long asked David one or two questions about his education and his early life and they talked about North Queensland.

"Rosemary told us most of this," the older man said. "I shall be sorry for our own sakes if she makes her life in Australia, because my wife and I are English. We shall never leave Oxford. But in another way, I think she may be doing the right thing. If she goes to Australia with you, she's going to the coming centre of the Commonwealth, where all the great affairs will happen in the future, and before she's old."

DAVID glanced at him curiously. "You think that, do you, sir? You think that Australia will be the centre of the Commonwealth in years to come?"

"I do. What's the population of Australia now?"

"About twenty-seven million, I think. It's changing pretty rapidly. It was twenty-three million at the last census, but that's some time ago."

The don nodded. "That's about right. And what do you think it will be, ultimately?"

"It's hard to say," David replied. "It's all a matter of water, I think. When I was a boy people were still saying that twenty-five million was the limit. But in my lifetime the Snowy irrigation scheme has been completed, and the Burdekin, and half a dozen others, and now they've got this nuclear distillation of sea water in the north, around Rum Jungle, and that's getting cheaper and cheaper. People are saying now that the limit may be fifty million, but others say a hundred and fifty million."

The professor said, "Whether it's fifty million or a hundred and fifty doesn't matter much. England can feed thirty million, and when the population of this country gets down to that figure things will suddenly improve, and England will be a happy and prosperous country again. But your country will always have the advantage of population, and the great advantage of strategic safety. And on top of that, you've got the multiple vote. How many votes have you got?"

"Me?" asked the pilot. "I'm a three-vote man."

"Basic and education?" David nodded. "What's the third?"

"Living abroad," the pilot said. "I got that for the war."

There was a short pause. "If everybody of your type in England had three votes instead of one," the don said heavily, "there'd be no question of a governor-general."

David sat silent. So that was what was in the wind. There was to be a governor-general in England as in all the other Dominions, a buffer between the elected politicians and the Queen, selected by the Queen for his ability to get on with the politicians of the day while serving her. Somebody who could take the day-to-day hack work of Royalty off her, who could open the town halls and lay the foundation stones and hold the levees and the Courts and the garden parties, and leave the Monarch free for the real work of governing the Commonwealth. And as he sat there pondering this information, the pieces of the puzzle fell together in his mind.

Tom Forrest was the man chosen to be the first Governor-General of England, Tom Forrest who had worked his way up from the bottom, Tom Forrest who was honoured and respected as a soldier, who had led the British people to victory in the last war, who had been Governor-General in Canada for the last two years, who was a friend of the Prince of Wales.

And at that thought, another piece of the puzzle fell into its place; with Tom Forrest or somebody like him between the Monarch and Iorwerth Jones, perhaps the succession would be less distasteful to Prince Charles. Perhaps that was what Rosemary's father meant. Perhaps a governor-general in England was a condition that the heirs to the throne had made, as an alternative to abdication. Perhaps the row over White Waltham aerodrome had been the last straw laid upon Prince Charles by the Prime Minister; perhaps it had even been intended to be so. Perhaps David had flown Prince Charles to Canada to speak both for his sister and himself, to tell their mother that they would not have the job.

All this passed through David's mind in a few seconds while Rosemary's father sat in thought before the fire, heedless of his indiscretion, or perhaps thinking that the pilot must already have heard about the changes that were to be made.

The don knocked his pipe out. "I should be getting back to Oxford," he said. "I wanted to talk to you about these things a little, because it is because of them that I am reconciled to Rosemary going to Australia, and marrying there if she should decide she wants to do so. I think your country is on the right road to greatness. I don't think this one is."

He got to his feet, and David got up with him. "Is that what you've been telling Tom Forrest, sir?" the pilot asked.

The don smiled. "More or less," he said. "More or less. When one holds certain prejudices very strongly one is apt to shoot them off at everyone one meets. Especially as one gets older."

David lifted the telephone and rang Flight Sergeant Syme, who was to drive the professor back to Oxford in David's car. And while they were waiting for the car they talked of minor matters. "I should have got in touch with you earlier," the pilot said. "I should have met Rosemary's mother. But things have been a little difficult in the last week or two, and now it looks as if I shall be off again quite soon."

The older man said, "Never mind. In your appointment you will probably be back in England in a month or so, before Rosemary, and you can come and see us then."

THE car came, and David went down to the street, saw the professor off and went back to his empty flat and stood before the dying fire for a long time, conning over what he had learned and speculating upon what it meant to him. If the Queen were to announce the appointment of Tom Forrest as Governor-General in England, it meant that she would leave England herself almost immediately; she would hardly remain in the country after the appointment.

In the year that he had been in England he had learned sufficient of the temper of the country to realize that the shock would be immense. That, then, was why Rosemary had told him to be very, very careful—and another piece of the puzzle fell into place. Rosemary

*Continued on page 36*


# DIGBY
## *IS COMING!*

NEXT WEEK JOHN BULL begins publication of a brilliantly funny new novel by David Walker. It is called *Digby*, and it is the most hilarious frolic of the year. With this book, David Walker deserves to stand beside Eric Linklater and Compton Mackenzie at their most uproarious.

DIGBY is the story of Digby P. Ross, president of a vast business in New York. He is suffering from frayed nerves, overwork and a marriage that has gone a little stale.

MADELEINE, his coolly beautiful wife, is a patroness of struggling artists and writers, finds in them the poetry and romance she thinks Digby has lost.

BUT HAS HE? Looking for a complete change, Digby hits on the most romantic idea of all: a shooting and fishing holiday in the wilds of Scotland, the mysterious land of his ancestors.

THE HIGHLANDS! There's something about Highland air that goes to the head if you aren't used to it. It certainly goes to Digby's. Within a few hours of his arrival, he is in trouble—and in love. In trouble with the police, and in love with a truly astonishing girl.

FIONA KILBURNIE, a strapping, auburn-haired Venus, has two interests in life: love, and her clan, of which she is chieftain. Digby takes up both interests....

SO BEGINS a breathless chapter of accidents, with laughter on every page, and the laughs are on Scotland as well as on Digby. The first long instalment, brilliantly illustrated in full colour by William Showell, begins . . .

***IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK***

Old garments go in; the "shoddy" comes out, ready to fill a mattress or stuff a chair—and bring fortune to the land of Waste Not Want Not

Dewsbury workers climb into the fresh air for lunch. At their backs nestles the town that feels itself to be a rather special community

## JOURNEY INTO BRITAIN

*Harry Hopkins reports from Dewsbury*

**To the stranger, the thing is fantastic: the miracle that turns the trash on the rag-and-bone men's barrows into bales of raw material worth a fortune. But to the people of the Rag Capital of the World, it's part of the natural order of things**

# TOWN THAT GROWS RICH ON RAGS

IN HIS WHITE COAT, grey hair brushed back against his temples, the auctioneer looked hard-headed. He rested a hand against the stack of gunny-covered bales and quizzically eyed the stolid circle of rag-merchants and shoddy-manufacturers gathered about him. *"201—Old Hospital Blue, Stripped! Come along now, what will you give me?"* Most of them were familiar faces: some of them had been coming to Cullingworth's rag sales, three times a week, ever since John Grimshaw had first been taken on there, as an office boy, fifty years ago.

*"Come along now, Curley,"* he cajoled, *"what about it?"* Incuriously, with proper professional detachment, the buyers examined the tangle of blue hospital trouser legs—from what forgotten front in what forgotten war?—erupting from the slit down the centre of the huge brown bale. "220 . . . 250 . . . 280 . . . 280 . . . *Finish!"* Grimshaw's pencil came down, snap, on the glossy cover of his auctioneer's notebook.

"Right—*forward,"* sang out Willie Carr, the weighman, and the raggers obediently tagged along behind him down through the stacks of bales, scribbling figures on the long, narrow sales lists, with their three hundred-odd esoteric items from "Canary Comforters" to "Old Billiard Green Worsteds."

Cap back to front, cherubic grin on his face, Willie Carr halted halfway down the long warehouse and slashed abruptly at a bale in front of him. The sackcloth parted under his knife. The rags looked out. *"202—Coarse Light Green Knitts . . . . what will you give me?"*

Behind the procession, marking its path, came the four warehousemen, steadily sewing up the slits in the sold bales.

Jim France had been sewing up bales here since 1919; but then, rag auctions had been going on, right here in Dewsbury, for 108 years. Rags from all over the world, rags by the million ton, pouring into this small West Riding town, set in the Calder valley, just where it begins to open up into the great plain of York.

Jim France could recall the day when there were two thousand bales in Cullingworth's auction warehouses; when a thousand bales

Weaving Chinese wedding blankets. Stripes symbolize fertility and various other attributes

Men with parts to play in the "Dewsbury miracle": left to right, Jim France, who sews up the bales, Willie Carr, weighman, and John Grimshaw, auctioneer. Their rags go all over the world

would go at a single sale. And even in these diminished days the bales of British rags—"best rags in the world," these people boast—still go out from Dewsbury to the United States, to Czechoslovakia, to Italy, to Japan. Even the Soviet Union, it seems, has need of the rags of the bourgeoisie—from Dewsbury.

To the stranger, the thing is fantastic; but to John Grimshaw, Willie Carr, Jim France, and indeed to the mayor, town clerk, and burgesses of the county borough of Dewsbury, it is all as much a part of the natural order of things as the grass which shoots up in spring and dies away in autumn. Decaying, the grass returns to earth to nourish new grass; and so, in Dewsbury, rags disintegrate, are torn apart, and are woven into new clothes which, in the fullness of time, become rags again, homing to Dewsbury, rag capital of the world.

### Through Rags To Riches

To Dewsbury men, rags are not just rags, and certainly are not dirty rags. They are the valuable and immensely varied raw material of a vast industry. And the story of Dewsbury is a neglected chapter in the larger, stirring history of the industrial genius of Britain, a story not of *from* rags to riches, but of *through* rags to riches.

For a world capital, the town is small. There are a good many just such places in the long, narrow valleys of the West Riding, winding their way into the Pennines and over to Lancashire on the farther side. Bleak moorland and drifting smoke; *The Messiah*, delivered with aplomb every Christmas; houses of Yorkshire stone, yellowish but rain-slashed and smoke-blackened, in austere rows, scarring the hillsides. Houses with two steps up to their front doors, three steps, whole flights of steps. In Dewsbury even the town hall is built on a steep slope, and the stone stairway to its front portal recedes heavenward, incongruously suggestive of the finale set in a Hollywood musical.

Yet, for all the industrial gauntness of the place, there is about Dewsbury a certain sense of order, a poise, an unobtrusive self-sufficiency. John Wesley came and preached on Dewsbury Moor in June, 1742, noting in his diary the "earnestness of the people covering the hilltop where I stood." And though today here, as elsewhere, fervour abates, that powerful Nonconformist yeast still froths and bubbles, and it is impossible to turn a corner in Dewsbury without confronting some Kingdom Hall or Holiness Church, the proliferating tabernacles of the Bible Students, Independent Methodists, Latter Day Saints, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists.

Odd rags, blown in the wind, flutter about the pavements. . . a bit of some venerable necktie, broken loose from the pack . . . a fragment of old grey army sock . . . a bright new tailor's clipping, capturing the eye. The rags flutter, too, like pennants from the big bales, lumbering through the streets on lorries. Dewsbury does not attempt to hide its means of livelihood.

Harry Watson fires the Dewsbury blunderbuss that is let off at ten o'clock every night

But though founded on the somewhat fitful activities of the rag-and-bone man, there is nothing insubstantial about Dewsbury. Ponderous black stone mills make caverns of its streets, portentous structures with elaborate porticos and figured cornices—many of them built out of the profits of the Franco-Prussian war, first of Dewsbury's many war bonanzas.

For Dewsbury, a town of men of peace, has flourished and grown on wars and the bottomless purse of War Departments, footing the bill for the miles of uniform cloth, first red, then khaki, the mountains of grey army blankets.

Peace succeeded war; slump followed boom. Mills would be sold up and their looms taken out. And then the rag merchants, needing cheap space, would move in—until today their trade signs form a long, almost unbroken line in the mill windows: "Shoddy, mungo and rags" . . . "Hosiery waste laps and noils, shoddies and rags" . . . "Specialists in new tailor's clippings" . . . "Commission carbonizing and rag-pulling."

### A £425 Heap Of Oddments

What bizarre activities proceed behind these massive, smoke-blackened walls? Let us enter the imposing premises of Messrs. Joseph Field, Ltd. The interior is cavernous—three-quarters of an acre, dedicated to rags.

Down the side of one floor, the finely sorted rags, the firm's product, lie in a series of partitions, ready for baling. "Now that little pile of Light Berlins," says Edward Field, indicating a modest heap of light-coloured knitted woollen oddments, waist-high and a couple of yards square, "that lot will be worth about £425 at present." It is one of the fundamentals of the trade that light-coloured rags, because they can be successfully dyed, fetch higher prices.

The sorting is going on on the upper floor. Its focus is a table, which on examination turns out to be a sort of shallow trough, with a wire-mesh

base. The table is heaped with mixed rags and surrounded by fifty or sixty big wicker baskets.

Two women stand at each table, grabbing the rags and pitching them one by one, with the dexterity and rapidity of postal sorters, into the basket appropriate to their colour, fabric and quality. A good girl can sort one hundredweight of old rags in about an hour. But the same quantity of "new rags"—tailors' clippings and the pattern-books they throw out at the end of the season—might take a day.

Now and again, a girl pauses for an instant over a piece of cloth; very likely she tears it. To her trained ear, a sharp, rending sound betrays cotton in the material. And that at once lowers the value of the rag, for cotton, a vegetable fibre, does not take dye in the same way as wool. The rag will have to be "carbonized"—treated in a revolving drum with hydrochloric acid gas, which causes the cotton to disintegrate.

### Cashmere Stocking Era

As the rags move across the sorting tables, their dust—what a time Sherlock Holmes would have had in Dewsbury!—falls through the wire floor into the bottom of the trough. This is not the cleancst of occupations, but Eveline Gordon, Field's forewoman, swears she enjoys the job.

A cheerful, rosy-cheeked little woman, Eveline Gordon has certainly seen British social history from a unique angle in the twenty-nine years since her mother, also a rag-sorter, first brought her here to learn the secrets of the trade. She can recall the days when there were eighteen varieties of black "knitts" alone. Women wore full-length black cashmere stockings then; there were all kinds of shawls, and old women sported little woollen caps, laced with blue ribbon; that blue ribbon could be an awful nuisance.

Then, one by one, the synthetics began to appear over the sorting tables—making new demands on the skill of the sorters. Manufacturers took to brightening the patterns of men's suits with a single rayon thread, moving in and out, showing only in minute dots. There was acetate rayon and there was viscose rayon; there was "fibro"—and there was lanital, the imitation wool which the Italians made from milk. Just now, the first nylon is beginning to appear.

Some of these man-made fibres will take dye like wool; others will not. Some can be removed, like cotton, by carbonization; others cannot. So accurate sorting can be vital. At first, in fact, some of the new fibres gave a little trouble. But within a week or two of their first appearance, the sensitive fingers and the sharp eyes of the sorters had their measure. Nylon, for instance, stands out in a fabric by its dull, lack-lustre look. The sorters have a word for it: "it stares."

### Almost A Sixth Sense

The rags had already been rough-sorted in their town of origin by the marine-store dealer, the man who hires out horses and carts to the rag-and-bone men and buys back their harvest. As good "mixed stockings" (the trade name for knitted woollen articles) the rag-merchant would buy the bale, either in one of Dewsbury's four rag-auctions, or direct from the local dealer, for about £200 a ton. He would sort it into about eighty grades and varieties, which would sell at prices ranging from £50 to £600 a ton.

In these intricate operations and calculations lay his service to the industry—and his profit or his loss. It is a system that rests not only on the trained fingers and alert eyes of the sorters but also on generations of experience, developing almost a sixth sense.

Rags from a residential resort, for instance, are worth more than rags from a mining town; rags from a port will have different qualities again; the finest rags of all, they tell you in Dewsbury, come from the Lowland towns of Scotland.

Thus, this modest town of Dewsbury—population 53,000, and one of Britain's smallest county boroughs—is the apex and culmination of

*Continued on page 28*

**Making up bales of sorted rags at Field's. On the left, Edward Field talks to forewoman Eveline Gordon. The rags in the area covered by this photograph are worth about £1,000**

**Dewsbury's great gift to Basutoland: blankets riotous with colour, dazzling with stripes—and made in the world's biggest blanket mill. In spite of its size, it is still a family company**

# THE MOMENT OF THE FLYING FISH

*by DAVID WALKER*

*It was perfect, magical—a moment to cherish all their lives*

THERE'S NOTHING I can get you, Mary? Aspirin?"

"I've taken two. Just leave me alone." Lady Coryton lay with eyes closed and a damp handkerchief on her brow. The cabin smelled pleasantly of eau-de-Cologne. Her migraine headaches came on quickly.

"I'll go on deck then." He made for the door while she still wanted to be left alone.

"Oh, John!"

"Yes, my dear?" The worse the headache, the more cyclonic the thoughts.

"I'm sure if you would only push yourself hard enough, they would have some important job on the Coal Board, or the railways, or in industry. But you never will. It's a kind of conceit, I think."

"Don't worry now, Mary. Just try to get some rest."

"How can I when this pain is stabbing through my head? Another thing I sometimes think is that you've wasted all your life and mine tilting at windmills. . . ."

But he escaped. It was wisdom and the line of least resistance. All her ambitions, he thought. And here I am—Crackpot Coryton, another governor who fell foul of the planters, on the shelf at fifty-two. And will the Coal Board want me? Nobody wants crackpots.

*His Majesty's Government is most earnestly in sympathy with the reforms which you advocate, but is of the opinion. . . .* And the last one: *His Majesty's Government has observed with concern a mounting discontent and antagonism towards you personally in certain important sections of the community. Accordingly, it is with great regret. . . .*

Such idealists, the politicians, until it's a question of pounds and dollars. Well, there's no good being bitter about that, or about Mary, either.

He reached the deck. They were heading east. A breeze came over the port bow. It was fine weather in the season of the hurricanes. She had begun to pitch. She was the kind of ship he liked, a twelve thousand tonner carrying passengers and cargo; carrying sugar, of course, and puncheons of molasses and pale rum and some mahogany and chilled bananas.

They were not far off shore. John Coryton stood at the rail, watching many things he knew —pellucid sea, white sand, pink villas, shacks and swaying cane, all the vivid—too vivid—contrasts. He saw two kites, a red one and a blue, climb and swoop with curving paper tails to stand against the good trade wind.

Yes, I shall miss my sugar island, the flame-of-the-forest and the poinciana, the early mornings in the garden, the simple jokes with dark men carrying *machetes*, with fat, cheerful mammies. I could so easily have fought it out. A few words here and there to make me Our Beloved Governor, champion of the Have-nots, and put the cat among the colonial pigeons. I might have done it but for Mary.

He strolled aft. He was not a melancholy man. It just happened that one of her headaches coincided with Goodbye, Island.

HE saw the woman as he was going to descend a companion ladder on the way aft to have a farewell look. She was middle-aged. Her hair was grey. She read a novel in a shady corner. It was a novel called *The Blessing*, and she smiled. Her jaw was still soft and cleanly cut, her nose still had a suggestion of Arab nostril; but there were lines etched in. She did not look up.

John Coryton came to the stern. He looked at the wake, churning crystal white and blue. He forgot about his sugar island. He made a journey back to long ago. . . .

They sailed from Barbados in the afternoon, that time. It was a mixed cargo—flour, live piglets, salt cod, goats, terra-cotta pots and this and that with many odours, and four passengers and one child.

*ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN HESELTINE*

The Rita G. was big for an island schooner, with brown sails, and the wind blew fair from the north-east, and she ran west by south for the island of Grenada. She rolled the vales and hills of a hearty sea; there was no flutter in her canvas.

One of the passengers—he was a traveller in drugs called Butter—an amiable man who had drunk much rum, retired to the men's cabin for a long sleep. Another of the passengers—she was a schoolteacher in St. George's, and a very poor sailor—retired to the women's cabin to lie down.

CORYTON and the fourth adult passenger sat at the poop. They talked for a while before exchanging names, and the child played with seashells on a rug on deck. She wore a harness with reins to her mother, and bells that jingled. She played precisely, as small girls do, unlike small boys. Sometimes she put a finger to shut one ear, and held a shell close against the other to listen for those lovely private surf-noises that shells make. Then she made another pattern on the rug. She was feminine at three.

They watched the helmsman, who watched his compass intermittently and his sails all the time. He had a cock to his head like all good sailors at the wheel. He was an ebony black man.

It turned out that her name was Caroline Smith, and she was quite like her names, Caroline in an indolence and absence, Smith in something else for him about her.

"This is the kind of sail that people would pay fortunes for, and it costs only ten coconut dollars. No, darling, stay on the rug."

"Wonderful till we're becalmed in the sun."

"That's very English," she said. And then: "Just look at that flying fish. It went on

**They talked far into the night, the helmsman close by, singing to the rhythm of his work. "Will you promise not to try and see me?" she asked**

and on, dripping drops. Do you like them?"

"Do I like eating them, or as fish?"

"Every way."

"I dunno," he said. "There's something sad about a flying fish."

"Why?"

"Because," he said, "they do it to escape from boats or barracuda; free of their element and in again."

"Hungry, Mummy."

"Supper the moment the sun goes down, darling. Let's watch for the green flash. Have you ever seen it?" she asked him.

"I think so."

"There, I saw it. Did you?"

"I'll say I did." And a moment later he asked her: "Where is Susan going to sleep?"

"I think I'll leave her here for an hour or two. It's so much cooler."

The colours went quickly, and the captain came to help with Susan's sleeping-place. He was medium-dark and earnest, was quiet, then shouting at his crew. John asked him about the clouds which piled abaft the starboard beam and did not come.

"Sir," he said, sing-song, "a fair wind all night, God willing."

Another sailor took the wheel: the breeze blew steady; it was dark till the moon came up; then they ate out of ghostly picnic baskets; it was just right in shirt sleeves or a dress, but not too warm with one sweater.

The child slept.

"Susan is your spitting image."

"You mean alike?"

"Yes. What does your husband do in Grenada?"

"He grows nutmegs and cocoa. His family have for two hundred years."

"How did you meet?"

SHE said: "I was on a cruise, and he showed us round the estate. That was how. Then he came up to America that summer."

"What is it like living in the West Indies?"

"So beautiful and so easy, and never too hot or too cold in the hills where we are. But I don't know. It seems to do something to white people, or perhaps it's the kind of people, or not having enough to do, or paradise with a volcano. And they aren't all that way. Arthur works twelve hours a day and is content and doesn't drink too much and likes his black people. I've made him sound too perfect, but he's very nice."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-six. And you?"

"I'm thirty."

"What do you do?"

"I'm in the Colonial Service. They sent me to study labour conditions in the Caribbean. The three months is nearly up. Then back to Nigeria."

"Is that Africa?"

"West Africa. I look after a district."

"The size of Wales, it must be. They always are in the English books I read."

"Wrong. Mine is a God's country district, bigger and better than Wales."

Laughter dwells in a sailing ship before the wind.

"You're married, too," she said.

"How did you know?"

"Because you let Susan make the first advances. Oh, and because——"

"My wife is in England. We have a boy of four."

"Tell me about her."

"She's tall and good-looking and capable and kind to people, and she puts up with me. We're happy."

"Yes, we are, too, and Arthur puts up with

*Continued on page 30*

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DAVID WALKER, *author of "The Moment Of The Flying Fish," has written a brilliant new novel. It is called "Digby," and it is being serialized in* JOHN BULL, *beginning in next week's issue. For further details, see the announcement on page 16.*

## TEN YEARS AFTER . . . by Captain B. H. Liddell Hart

# Did we miss our chance in Sicily?

**Helped by a Hitler-Mussolini rift, we made our perilous leap into Europe. One stroke could have turned it into overwhelming victory**

Kesselring. He had anxiously expected an attempt to cut off his forces in Sicily

Von Senger: "The one success of the Tiger tanks was of little value strategically"

Nye. His letter, washed ashore on a corpse, was part of a brilliant deception "plant"

AFTER THE EVENT, the Allies' conquest of Sicily in 1943 looked an easy matter. But actually this initial re-entry into Europe was a hazardous leap, hedged with uncertainties. For its successful outcome it owed much to a series of long-hidden factors.

First, to the blind pride of Hitler and Mussolini jointly in trying to save face in Africa. Then to Mussolini's jealous fear of his German allies, and reluctance to let them take a leading part in the defence of Italian territory. Then to Hitler's belief, in disagreement with Mussolini, that Sicily was not the Allies' real objective—a mistaken belief that partly arose from a brilliantly subtle "plant" by the British deception plan.

The first factor counted most of all. One of the greatest ironies in the whole war was the way that Hitler and the German General Staff—who had always feared to embark on overseas expeditions in reach of British seapower—abstained from sending Rommel sufficient forces to follow up his victories, yet in the last lap sent so many troops across to Africa as to forfeit their prospects of defending Europe.

### Success Lured Them On

Ironically, too, they were drawn into this fatal folly by their own unexpected success in halting Eisenhower's first drive for Tunis after they had been caught napping by the Anglo-American invasion of French North Africa in the previous November. While the Allies' spearhead was advancing rather cautiously eastward from Algeria, the Germans had quickly reacted to the threat by flying troops across the Mediterranean in the hope of frustrating the Allies' early capture of the ports of Tunis and Bizerta. They succeeded in holding the mountain approaches and producing a prolonged stalemate.

The German-Italian bridgehead that was built up in Tunisia kept the Allies at bay throughout the winter, and provided shelter for the remains of Rommel's army at the end of his two-thousand-mile retreat from Alamein. Nevertheless, the Allies' early failure to capture Tunisia turned out immensely to their advantage in the long run. For Hitler and Mussolini would not listen to any argument for evacuating the German and Italian troops while there was still time and opportunity to get them away.

In a final effort to convince Hitler of the necessity, Rommel flew to Hitler's headquarters in Russia on March 10. His private papers reveal how futile it proved—"I emphasized as strongly as I could that the 'African' troops must be re-equipped in Italy to enable them to defend our southern European flank. But it was all hopeless." Rommel's arguments were brushed aside as the pessimism of an ill man. Hitler would not allow him to return to his command in Africa, but ordered him to go on sick leave—so as to get fit in time to take command of the summer offensive to drive the Allied forces back to Casablanca and into the Atlantic!

The Allied armies now closed in upon the bridgehead for the kill, while the Axis troops had to sit there with sinking spirits, awaiting the blow. They managed to check the Allies' first attempt to crack their defence but collapsed when their front was penetrated in the next big attack, on May 6. The break-through was produced by Alexander's masterly plan and switching of the Allied weight to a fresh sector. But the utter breakdown that followed was largely due to the defending troops' acute consciousness that they were fighting with their backs close to a hostile sea.

The strenuous build-up of the Sicily landing.

In the collapse nearly a quarter of a million men were taken prisoner, including most of Rommel's veterans and the pick of the Italian Army. But for the great "bag" in Tunisia, these forces would have provided a very strong defence for the Italian gateways into Europe. Their capture left Italy and the Italian Islands almost naked of defensive covering. But the Allies were not ready to take immediate advantage of the opportunity. Fortunately for them, the opportunity was prolonged by dissension and divergent views in the opposing headquarters.

### German Aid Was Refused

Here we come to the next major revelation—which I had from General Westphal, who was then Chief of Staff to Field-Marshal Kesselring, the Commander-in-Chief in the South. As Italy had no mobile mechanized forces left, the Chief of her Army Staff, General Roatta, begged the Germans to provide a reinforcement of six panzer type divisions.

At that moment Hitler was moved to meet this urgent appeal, and sent Mussolini a personal message offering him that number. But Mussolini replied to Hitler saying that he needed one only, as an addition to the drafts which had been in transit to Tunis and were now being hurriedly formed into two scratch divisions. Mussolini's letter even went on to express a wish that no further German troops should be dispatched.

Mussolini's reluctance to accept Hitler's offer

A strange coincidence, reveals Liddell Hart, frustrated the hope of quickly clearing the island

was due to a mixture of pride and fear. He could not bear to let the world, and his own people, see that he was dependent on German aid. As Westphal remarked: "He wanted Italy to be defended by Italians, and shut his eyes to the fact that the appalling state of his forces made such an idea quite impracticable." But his further reason was that he did not want to let the Germans acquire a dominating position in Italy. Anxious as he was to keep out the Allies, he was almost as anxious to keep out the Germans.

### Hitler Grew More Dubious

Roatta, and Kesselring, eventually managed to persuade Mussolini that larger German reinforcements were essential. So he agreed to further German divisions coming in—subject to the condition that they should be subordinated to the tactical control of Italian commanders. Although accepting a second German division in Sicily, to support the nine weak and ill-equipped Italian divisions guarding the coasts, he would not even allow the two to be combined under a German corps commander. They were distributed by the Italian commander in five small packets, as local reserves to the coastal divisions.

By the time that Mussolini was willing to accept more German help, Hitler was becoming more dubious about providing it, and also tending to a different view about the danger-point.

On the one hand, he suspected that the Italians would throw over Mussolini and make peace—a suspicion that was soon borne out by events. On the other, he came to think that Mussolini, the Italian High Command, and Kesselring were wrong in their view that the Allies' next move from Africa would be a jump into Sicily. On that point he proved wrong.

Hitler thought that the Allies were more likely to land in Sardinia, an easy stepping-stone into Corsica, and a well-placed springboard for a jump on to either the French or Italian mainland. At the same time an Allied landing in Greece was expected. These ideas were fostered by receiving from Nazi agents in Spain copies of documents found on a British officer whose body had been washed ashore on the Spanish coast.

Besides identity papers and personal correspondence, the documents included a private letter written by General Nye, the Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff, to General Alexander. This letter referred to recent official telegrams about forthcoming operations, and its supplementary comments indicated that the Allies were really intending to land in Sardinia and Greece while aiming by their "cover plan" to convince the enemy that Sicily was their objective.

Both the corpse and the letter were part of an ingenious deception devised by a section of the British Intelligence service. This was so well worked out that the heads of the German Intelligence service were convinced of its genuineness.

The Allied invasion of Sicily took place on July 10—at a series of points along a hundred-mile stretch of the south and south-east coasts. It was delivered by eight divisions, with five more ready to back them up. Montgomery's British Eighth Army formed the right wing, and Patton's American Seventh Army the left wing. The wide distribution helped to confuse the defending commanders and thus delay their counter-moves during what is normally the most critical period of any seaborne invasion.

### Defenders Were Off Guard

In this case, there was no really critical period except on one sector. The landings were hampered by a rough sea, but the bad weather had helped to put the coast defence troops off their guard. Alexander aptly summed up the first stage in saying: "The Italian coastal divisions disintegrated almost without firing a shot." Thus, almost the whole burden of the defence fell upon the shoulders of the Germans, with their mere two scratch divisions.

I got an account of events on their side from General Ferdinand von Senger, a panzer expert and former Rhodes scholar at Oxford: "Defence action was hampered by the fact that our forces were scattered—as Field-Marshal Montgomery rightly remarks. The chief German tank force, a group of Tigers, was launched along with the Hermann Goering division to counter-attack the American landing near Gela. The tanks reached, as I saw myself, the dunes. They checked the Allied advance at this spot, but had rather heavy losses from the fire of naval guns.

"Although they succeeded in forcing the Allied forces to withdraw, and even to re-embark, at this particular spot, their success was of little value strategically as the Allied forces pushed ahead on almost every other sector."

### Key To The Problem

The British forces had established themselves in, and cleared, the south-east corner of the island during the first three days. On the 13th, Montgomery relates: "I decided that we should make a great effort to break through into the plain of Catania from the Lentini area and ordered a major attack for the night of July 13." The key problem was to capture the Primasole bridge over the River Simeto, a few miles south of Catania. A parachute brigade was used for this purpose. Only about half of it was dropped in the right place, but this portion succeeded in securing the bridge intact.

The next part of the story was revealed in the account I got from General Student, the chief of the German airborne forces. His two divisions had been stationed by Hitler in the south of France ready to fly to Sardinia if the Allies landed there, as Hitler expected. But airborne forces formed a very flexible strategic reserve easily switched to meet a different situation, as Student's story shows.

"When the Allies landed in Sicily on July 10," he said, "I at once proposed to make an immediate airborne counter-attack there with both my divisions. But Hitler turned this down—Jodl, in particular, was against it. The 1st Parachute Division, however, was soon sent to Sicily—for use as ground troops. The division was flown by air, in successive lifts, and dropped behind our front in the eastern sector south of Catania. I had wanted them to be dropped behind the Allied front. The first contingent was dropped about two miles behind our front and, by a strange coincidence, it landed almost simultaneously with the British parachute troops who were dropped behind our front to open the bridge across the Simeto river. It overcame these British parachute troops and rescued the bridge from their hands. This was on July 14."

### Move That Was Dreaded

Montgomery's army, as it came up, succeeded after three days' stiff fighting in recapturing the bridge and reopening the way into the plain of Catania. But their attempt to press on northward was blocked by increasingly strong resistance from the German parachute troops and tanks, now concentrating to block the coast route to Messina, sixty miles distant, where the north-east corner of Sicily lies close to the toe of Italy.

That frustrated the hope of a quick clearance of Sicily. Montgomery was forced to shift the weight of the Eighth Army westward for a circuitous push round the foothills of Mount Etna. A full month was consumed in this slow push over difficult ground. The Germans were thus able to bring their forces back to the Italian mainland, "to fight another day."

Much to Kesselring's relief, the Allied High Command had not attempted a landing in Calabria, the toe of Italy, behind the back of his forces in Sicily—to block their withdrawal across the Straits of Messina. He had been anxiously expecting such a stroke thoughout the Sicilian campaign, while having no forces available to meet it. In his view, "a secondary attack on Calabria would have enabled the Sicily landing to be developed into an overwhelming Allied victory." THE END

Where the system has "really no choice but to let prisoners settle their own accounts": Dartmoor jail and Princetown, isolated on the Devon moor.

**INSIDE DARTMOOR** *Part III of a personal story that reaches into the prison underworld*

# Catch this! whispered the tobacco baron

## *ANONYMOUS*

IT HAD TAKEN ME six weeks to settle down in Dartmoor. Neither the length of my "stretch" nor the nature of my record entitled me to particular consideration from the other prisoners. I knew nobody and scarcely anyone knew me. Most of the six hundred convicts at the Moor had arrived there by the classic chain of crime: approved school, Borstal, local and regional prison. Many prisoners were old friends, or old accomplices. By the strange but efficient system of communication which, like a secret wavelength, operates in the penal world (we knew the gist of Home Office orders before they officially arrived at the prison) many convicts landed in Princetown to find themselves expected by their friends.

Such as these settled down immediately. They knew at once who were the "grasses," or informers, to avoid; which "screws"—warders—were "bent" and which "bad," or hard. They were told of the foibles of the medical officer and advised which classes to attend. And they soon knew the name of the "baron" they had best go to for tobacco.

Prison has its underworld and the baron is its king; the personality that controls its black market and the system known as "trafficking." There are two and sometimes three barons to every landing of sixty or seventy prisoners. They are the most powerful and privileged among the convict population of a prison, and authority must reckon with them. A baron never has his cell searched—"turned over"—without warning. Unless he does something dramatically illegal he is never "nicked," or charged. No warder will ever "have it in for him," and he will be enviably free of the harassing, peevish pinpricks with which some prison officers chivvy their charges. The baron enjoys these immunities because he is useful to the system, whose device in any prison is "Let's have no trouble." Like the usurer in an Indian village, the baron has almost every prisoner round him in his debt, and thus possesses something officials can never hope to attain—an internal authority.

### Ruthless Bid For Power

How does a man become a baron at Dartmoor? To begin with, he must be serving a long sentence, without which he will not be respected, and he does not become a baron overnight. He must have considerable personality, physical courage, organizing ability and complete ruthlessness. He will be the widest of the wide boys, the successful criminal who has taken power, not in the vagrant underworld outside, but in the morose, confined and static world of a penitentiary.

A baron never approaches customers himself. He employs lieutenants, or "runners," as they are called; a runner, the tiger's jackal, supplies the tobacco and collects the interest, which is fifty per cent. The Baron must know everything about the men he rules, and it is the runner's business to supply the information. He and his companions—for the baron keeps a regular bodyguard—are paid for their services. These services include such chores as bribing a "screw," "marking the card" (beating up) of a recalcitrant debtor, and obtaining a new pair of trousers for the boss. For the baron is a real toff, as any wide boy must be in a criminal community.

I could hardly believe my eyes when I first saw a baron at Dartmoor. He was a big man whose cell was on my landing, and he was doing a long sentence. In contrast with the seedy tramp which prison clothes make of the average convict, this man looked as if he had just walked out of a flashy Charing Cross Road hosiers. His flannel trousers were well creased and clean; his shoes winked; his tasty blue tie had the fashionable fat knot. I calculated how much this rig-out had cost him: shoes, a half ounce of tobacco; trousers, one and a half ounces; tie and cap, half ounce each—total, three ounces. A small fortune. Any prisoner with tobacco—"snout"— to spend can buy extra or newer clothing, as he can buy extra food from the kitchen or cookery class. But only a baron can pay to have his trousers pressed.

Like anyone who controls distribution in a restricted community, the barons had their code. A baron must honour his obligations and pay his bookmaking debts; a welching baron

News came in, says the author of these articles, by the strange channel of communication which, like a secret wavelength, operates in the penal world

would have an uncomfortable settling day at the Moor. He must stick to his landing and not attempt to invade another baron's fief. The price of his power is integrity. Personally, I had nothing against the barons, and was once treated very generously by one.

While we were "slopping out" in the recess one morning, the baron whose beautiful clothes had so astonished me suddenly whispered "Catch this!" and pressed a heavy packet into my hand. Back in my cell, I opened it, and found fourteen ounces of snout, which was reclaimed at dinner time by one of the baron's runners.

The explanation was that the baron's cell was being "turned over" that morning. A pound of snout found among his belongings would have been too much for any warder. I was rewarded with three ounces for helping out—enough to keep me for several days in "roll ups" (only Woodbines can be bought at the canteen and most convicts prefer to roll their own smokes) at the rate of twenty-two "roll ups" per quarter ounce. With my three ounces I was rich; rich enough had I need, to buy his "cob" (cobby-bread, the prison loaf) from a tobacco-famished comrade for three cigarettes, or risk two "roll ups" each way on the result of the Derby with my bookmaking baron. I had enough, too, to hire a convict to "do" a man for me. The tariff for this service at Dartmoor was two ounces of snout.

### Problem Of Hiding Places

As with money, the great problem with snout is to safeguard it. Tobacco can be concealed in mattresses—although discovery there is a very serious offence—or hung out of the window through the ventilation slot, or handed to a friend—for a consideration, for nothing is free in Dartmoor.

A baron, although dealing with perhaps sixty or seventy ounces of tobacco, will keep a float of only five or six ounces in his cell. The rest will be looked after by his henchmen.

When a baron leaves prison or is transferred elsewhere, he hands his business to a successor, generally his chief runner. The retiring baron's stock and goodwill is paid for in cash to be collected at an agreed date and place outside. One baron who left my hall while I was there was reputed to have handed over stock worth £120 to the convict taking his place.

A baron who has been bilked has, naturally, no redress but violence. He will allow one week's grace to a defaulter; if the prisoner still cannot pay he is "done" by one or more of the baron's runners. There are various ways of "sorting out" a man at Dartmoor. Weapons are no problem. The broken half of a razor blade can be officially "lost," stuck in a chip of wood and used for a slashing. It is surprising how lethal a cone of hard leather can become when hammered and hardened. The blacksmith's shop can always provide an odd piece of iron; prised off and sharpened, the steel sliver on the heel of a prison boot can cut like a knife; iron filings knotted in a rag make an effective cosh. If these make no appeal, a man can slip while walking up the stairs and let his heavy working boot smash the face of the prisoner behind him.

### Terror—No Escape

A convict who is to be "done" is never in ignorance of the fact. One of the most frightening things I saw at the Moor was the terror this knowledge can raise. There is no escape. The last person the condemned man can turn to for help is a "screw." Warders have really no choice but to let the prison underworld settle its own accounts; an attitude which, once more, is implicit in the "no trouble at any price" system. The consequences of this refusal to interfere were dramatic and almost tragic in the case of a convict called "Sammy."

Sammy occupied a cell opposite mine. He was a West Country man, very popular and known all over the Moor. He was also a baron's runner. Recklessly, Sammy began embezzling; he kept for his own use half of the snout his master had given him to distribute to customers. When the reckoning came he was completely unnerved. Not knowing when and from whom the attack was coming, he shut himself in the one place of safety left him: his cell. There, after standing the strain for several days, he gashed his wrists so deeply that he was taken to hospital. When his wrists were healed he was charged with attempted suicide. Only after he had done his punishment was he removed elsewhere, away from the baron—and danger.

Of course, Sammy was out of order: he was trafficking, and he was a baron's runner. Of course, trafficking is illegal. Of course, Sammy knew the risks. The fact remains that authority, if it had been allowed to know what was going on, could have saved a man dangerous injury and weeks of fear.

Sammy's case could be called a commercial accident, the result of a lack of probity. But not all violence at Dartmoor was ordered by, or could be imputed to, the barons. There will always be men in a criminal community who have dues to settle, and prison, with its tendency to encourage brooding and self-pity, aggravates the bitterness of real or imagined wrongs. The attack is always cowardly: a kick in the groin, a bash in the face with a boot or a metal jug.

Sometimes the picture is healthier. I twice saw a warder invite two men between whom a feud was simmering to settle it in some secluded part of the exercise yard, or on a working party outside. "Take your jackets off and have a go!"—and the watching prisoners were treated to an old-fashioned bare-knuckle fight.

The hardest fight I saw in the Moor had nothing to do with personal enmity. It was over a "queer." A queer is one of the prison names for a homosexual. I think few homosexuals go to Dartmoor; I feel sure many are made there. Sex in prison is like a well-thumbed catalogue of unobtainable luxuries. Men deprived of it ice it with the grossest fancies. With the normal outlet closed, its impetus washes back into inversion.

On any showing, the queers at Dartmoor were a nuisance to convicts and officials alike. They were continually "beefing." They were quarrelsome, lazier even than the normal convict, and quite unpredictable. To the prisoner who had come to terms with the Moor and had made up his mind to grin and bear it, their peevish lamentations were intolerable.

### Punishment Was Useless

The first queer I saw was also the Moor's most notorious. His name was "Mary" X——. "Mary" was a burglar. He was a tallish, emaciated man who seemed to be double-jointed. He had no control of his body. His arms would fly out in slow, whirling gestures; his legs would slide from under him. When "Mary" came down a corridor, he appeared to bounce from one wall to another. He did his best to look as feminine as possible. His lips were made up with colour rubbed from a damp cigarette packet; he greased his eyebrows and eyelashes with margarine. In spite of regulations, "Mary" contrived to let his hair grow long over the ears and at the top of his head. This grotesque creature was quite unregenerate. Punishments, bread and water diets, official harangues and ridicule had no effect on him.

How much that was technically culpable went on under all this posing and posturing? I think

**Prisoners from a Dartmoor working party in a mess-room built by themselves on the moor. The most coveted jail fatigue is farm work, allowed only to men with less than ten months to serve**

very little. In general, the queers were more a nuisance than a moral danger. There is perversion in all prisons. At Dartmoor, where prisoners were locked away from one another, it was the idea rather than the occasion that corrupted.

One school of medical thought has put forward the idea that homosexuality is inevitable in prison and that the healthiest tactic is to ignore it and let it have its way. I cannot say how "Mary," "Sandra" and "Pam" reacted to this experiment, if it has been made at the Moor.

### Newspapers Are Censored

After six months at the Moor I came "on stage." Coming on stage brings certain privileges, above all that of "association." Association means that a prisoner can mix with other stage men on two nights a week in the main hall. There he finds recreation in the form of games: chess, draughts and dominoes. He will also find daily and weekly newspapers, but he may not find his favourite. For reasons difficult to understand, prison authority allows prisoners to read only that opinion which is favourable to the government in office. In my time, with the Socialists in Westminster, there were no Tory newspapers on show. Unless things have changed, as I write this, no prisoner at the Moor is able to enjoy the *Daily Herald*. And any newspaper which carried anything to do with prison life was rigorously censored.

Stage men could also go to the classes held in the hospital wing each night: joinery, shorthand, book-keeping, leather work, cookery. Except for cookery, where you could eat all you baked and for which there was an interminable waiting list, there were few enthusiasts for classes. They were well-attended simply because they offered a chance to escape from prison's greatest tyranny, the cell.

Personally, although grateful for it, I found association irksome. Six warders watched us as we read or played our games; another ten—in case of emergency—yawned their time away in a small gas-heated room at the end of the hall. There was the appearance of liberty without its reality. I felt that the "screws" suspected a dispensation that allowed prisoners to congregate for any reason other than that of being marched about or counted out. For a warder, there as everywhere, a prisoner's proper place was his cell. And the increased surveillance was unnecessary. No convict would risk the extra hours of cell confinement which loss of association privileges would mean.

Dartmoor is supposed to house the hard cases, the tough prisoners of the stick-at-nothing type. It is true that half its population are former Borstal boys and that there is a proportion of vicious convicts. But attacks on officers are rare except in general disturbances like the great mutiny of 1932 or the far less serious "incident" at Christmas time in 1947. Such isolated attacks as occur are not, I think, premeditated, but due to a prisoner's loss of control; or, as in the one case I witnessed, the sudden explosion of a long-nourished sense of injury and injustice.

The man in this case was called "Willie," a dour, quiet boy from the north whom I had never seen give any trouble. One morning at exercise, before marching away to the mailbag shed, Willie was seen by the "screw" in charge, an officer called Z——, to be eating a lump of bread. "I'll have that," said warder Z——, and Willie handed over the bread without a word. In the mailbag shop later, as Z—— walked among us, Willie suddenly stood up and hit him very deliberately in the face. The warder pressed the alarm bell and Willie let himself be pinioned without a struggle. For this attack he got five days loss of remission and twenty-eight days loss of stage privileges.

### Rancour "Blew Its Top"

How was it that this self-disciplined boy, who had apparently made up his mind to do his time at the Moor with as little trouble as possible to himself and authority, suddenly revolted and committed a serious offence? The explanation, as I saw it, was that prison officer Z—— chivvied prisoners, not because he was naturally malign—the bullying type of warder who torments convicts because he likes doing so was very rare in Dartmoor—but through lack of confidence and personality. The attack from Willie was the result of a long history of petty irritation; the rancour fermented slowly till suddenly, as Willie described it, it "blew its top."

There were many of what are known as nervous cases in Dartmoor, some of whom should have been under treatment for neurosis. Unless a prisoner goes mad, this is not a disease recognized by the prison medical authorities. Like my fellows, I found out by experience that I would have to be very ill indeed before I risked treatment in the Moor, or even dared to report sick at the morning parade. If a man is taken ill in his cell he can press the button which rings a bell in the warder's room on each landing. Ringing it at night is not popular with the "screws." I have heard a bell ringing for long enough without being answered. Then every prisoner demonstrates by bawling and beating on the door of his cell.

The medical officer is not available at night, but the landing officer is provided with a medicine which has come to be as closely associated with Dartmoor as the moor and the fog. This is the notorious "white mixture." Nobody knows what this equivocal medicine contains—some say bismuth—but it is administered for nearly every symptom, from fainting to a nagging appendix. It also reappears in the prison hospital.

### Patients Kept In Cells

The hospital at Dartmoor is not specially built for its purpose, but was and still is part of the prison. There are no wards. As always in the Moor, a man, sick or well, must go in a cell. Its appointments are exactly the same as those in the cell he has left, except that the steel door is doubled with a grille, and the man is issued with an extra blanket and sheet and an extra pint of water.

I had to go to hospital for my teeth, eight of which were pulled out by a visiting dentist. I was fortunate in having anything so definite as toothache. A prisoner on my landing, whom I knew well, was not so lucky. "Stocky" was a thin, weedy man who had often told me how ill he felt. He had no idea what was the matter with him, and the white mixture gave him no relief. The pain in his sides got so bad that finally, one summer, he decided to report sick. Stomach trouble was diagnosed, and for a week he was treated for this in hospital. He dropped dead on a working party two days after his discharge. Six convicts who knew Stocky well complained officially after his death. They were referred to the finding of the inquest held at Tavistock: death by natural causes.

I do not wish to imply by mention of this incident that Stocky died from lack of medical skill and attention—there was no evidence of that—but to suggest that the speed with which he was discharged from hospital and put back to work is inherent in a penal tradition. That tradition presupposes that all convicts at Princetown are hard cases and tough men, and should be treated as such.

### "A Man Must Do His Time"

I had the strong impression that detention in hospital was a barely tolerable break in a man's sentence, that it was little different from coddling and was bad for prison morale. The implicit and sometimes expressed dictum in the Dartmoor system was *"A man must do his time."*

When Stocky died, I was approaching the end of my stretch. I was a "blue" prisoner then, having done two and a half years of my sentence. Being a "blue coat" is the last stage a prisoner reaches, and it brings further privileges. Blue prisoners have three nights a week "out," when they congregate in D hall for association; they eat together in the dining hall instead of in their cells. They are also allowed to play football. Cricket, although encouraged among the insane at Broadmoor, is considered too risky for the desperadoes at the Moor, the cricket bat being classified as a "weapon."

Although a prisoner works outside after eighteen months, only a blue prisoner with not more than ten months of his sentence to run can volunteer for the farm-work party, the most desirable of the outside fatigues. On my last farm fatigue I was still earning full remission—a third of my stretch of four years.

The knowledge was pleasant; so pleasant that I let it go to my head. I made a fool of myself.

***NEXT WEEK: My dash for freedom—and the inside story of some other escapes***

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**ANOTHER SWEET TREAT BY MARS**

# JOURNEY INTO BRITAIN

*Continued from page 19*

an ingenious and complicated organization for making something out of nothing, value out of no-value. That old blue suit, for instance (blue worsted and very smart—once), brings perhaps one penny or ½d. a pound from the rag-and-bone man who calls at the door. From the rag-and-bone man's cart it reaches the town marine-store dealer, who pays, perhaps, 2d. a pound for it, and puts it into his "Mixed unripped [with linings intact] cloth, gents." This he will, in due course, sell to Dewsbury for something like 3d. a pound.

Then begins the Dewsbury Miracle. The old suit, in the company of thousands, if not millions, of others arrives in these great gaunt warehouses, and figures, perhaps, in auction lists ("Faded blue worsteds"). It shuttles about the rag-merchant's floors, reaches the "rippers" who snip off the buttons, rip out the possibly rayon linings, and cut off the cotton threaded seams. It moves across the sorting riddles with the old suits of Italian peasants and French mechanics and Swedish lumbermen until it finally attains its precise, minutely detailed category where it fulfils the demands of the shoddy manufacturers at, perhaps, 1s. 2d. a pound.

## Weight Has Been Halved

But—and here is the essence of the miracle—the blue worsted "rags" for which the shoddy manufacturer is willing to pay 1s. 2d. a pound are now only one-half the weight of the suit the rag-and-bone got for one penny. But it is Blue Worsted—and nothing else. It is an exactly defined article—just what the shoddy manufacturers ordered.

Though the rag-pulling machine was invented in 1801 by three Glasgow mathematical-instrument makers, it was not until Benjamin Law, inspired it is said by the sight of women knitting new garments by unravelling old stockings, had the notion of turning rags into new cloth by spinning their pulled-out fibres, which is shoddy, that this invention came into its own.

These rag-pulling machines, also—and very appropriately—called "devils," centre on a large roller which bristles with thousands of sharp steel teeth. Into the champing, rending jaws of these "devils" I watched the disappearance of piles of natty gents' suitings, of German grey-green, of French Air Force officers' "horizon blue," of tailors' clippings.

And from the other end I saw curling, soft and fleecy, what appeared to be wool, what in fact was wool, but second-hand wool—wool with a long and complicated history, both animal and human, the shoddy and mungo that Dewsbury thrives on.

## Famous Dewsbury Boast

"Shoddy" is the long fibre, pulled from the softer—knitted or loosely woven—rags. "Mungo" is the shorter fibre pulled from the harder, more closely woven cloths—good quality worsteds or thick, hard felts.

In the early days of the industry, the story goes, a workman found these harder rags sticking when he tried to feed them into a machine. "They won't go," he said. But the foreman was made of stern West Riding stuff. "They *mun'* go!" he said. They did, indeed, go—in a duly modified machine — and ever afterwards the resultant fibre has been "mungo."

They have a famous boast in Dewsbury: "We can spin anything with two ends." Yet dare to imply for one instant that shoddy might just possibly be a little "shoddy" and these people will first wince—then smile, pityingly, on your ignorance.

Today the wool industry is more than ever an affair of complex, carefully calculated blends of wools of various sorts and qualities, and sometimes of other fibres, too, each incorporated with a particular purpose in view. In such blends, shoddy and mungo play a necessary part; and shoddy can, indeed, be dearer than virgin wool in some qualities.

In tweed suitings, for instance, shoddy, incorporated in the blend, may bring to the finished cloth a "kind handle." With colours suitably blended, shoddy might, on the other hand, provide a hard-wearing inexpensive "heather mixture" for miners' stockings. As "filling" in greatcoats it gives added solidity and wind-protection.

"Stop fussing about the tickets —we're in the wrong train"

For all that, it is in time of war that the arts of Dewsbury rise to their greatest heights. In the first World War forty-five million articles of army clothing found their way home here to Dewsbury from the battle-fronts, to be reincarnated in miles of new khaki, (for which, incidentally, the authorized recipe is seventy per cent virgin wool, fifteen per cent "new rags," fifteen per cent "old rags") Figures for the second World War, even more spectacular, are still on the secret list: Dewsbury thinks the Germans would have given quite a lot to know their methods.

And if, in these impoverished post-war days, it is vital for us as a nation to make the greatest possible use of our home resources, certainly Dewsbury folk are the people to teach us. For, in their many and ingenious ways, the citizens of Dewsbury have long been dedicated to the proposition: Waste Not, Want Not.

## Even The Dust Is Sold

Take the narrow lane that winds alongside the inky Calder and you come to a small hut, a little reminiscent of Old Peggotty's. A telephone insulator sticks from one corner and smoke curls from the tin chimney. But the door is padlocked. Carl Armitage—another Dewsbury Armitage—is away with his lorry, gathering his dust from the shoddy manufacturers, the raggers, the carbonizers.

On an acre or so of waste ground behind the hut the dust lies in a series of plateaux, brown and grey and black, old dust and new dust, the dust of ages and the dust of continents, mixed by experienced hands. Rich in ammonia, the dust is valuable fertilizer and will soon be growing potatoes on the broad acres of Lincolnshire and hops in the hopfields of Kent.

Return from this no-man's-land by the river, climb the hill on the road to Halifax, and in another old mill Fred Booth's famed Heckmondwike Flock Company is turning Dewsbury's rags to yet another use. Churned and drubbed in heavy washing machines, dried and sterilized in steam, they emerge from the rag-pulling machines as "washed flock" and wool felts for filling mattresses and easy chairs. The dust and minute fibres extracted in the process are not wasted. They are sold to papermakers for use as "filling."

With these unique talents it is hardly surprising that, deep in its cleft in the Calder valley, Dewsbury should feel itself to be a rather special community, level-headed and self-sufficing and having only tenuous connection with the mad world outside. Even immigrants from Batley, one and three-quarter miles distant, rank as aliens.

## Towns Are Bitter Rivals

Particularly, indeed, men from Batley. For though indissolubly linked by both industry and geography, the twin towns are old and bitter rivals. Each has its own weekly newspaper, published within its boundaries. But although the *Dewsbury Reporter* duly becomes the *Batley Reporter* for purposes of sale in Batley and conversely, the *Batley News* becomes the *Dewsbury News* when crossing the frontier, each paper's sale on foreign territory remains unimpressive.

Outside a lady's hairdresser's shop in a Dewsbury street was displayed a small handwritten notice, hanging over a collection box. "Collected in this box: £20 os. 1½d. to purchase Billy, Dewsbury's last Railway Horse. *Batley Have Already Purchased Theirs*, Tommy, who has been saved from the slaughterhouse."

"Anything Batley Can Do, We Can Do Better," might well be Dewsbury's civic motto. In the interests of truth, however, it must be said that this theory is not invariably borne out by practice.

Batley, to Dewsbury's mortification, currently surpasses it at Rugby League football. Batley, by common consent, is superior also in the strength of its Nonconformist Conscience. At Christmas, Batley magistrates traditionally refuse an extension of licences; and traditionally, the unregenerate of Batley join in nightly exodus to Dewsbury.

Yet there are matters in which Dewsbury can make good its boast without challenge. Dewsbury is still the greatest rag centre in the world. On a less global scale, Dewsbury's market is so widely known as "right good" that people come in from as far away as Huddersfield. Thirdly, in Wormald and Walkers, Dewsbury has the biggest blanket mill in the world.

Acres of blankets, soft white blankets, grey army blankets, rolling from the long rows of looms. . . . And then, as one walks through the vast, thundering weaving shed, suddenly the place flowers like an orchid house; the blankets moving across the looms are riotous with colour, dazzling with zebra stripes.

Here is Dewsbury's great gift to Basutoland. For these glorious wrappings, thousands of Basuto natives will save their pennies from their wages in the mines so that when their contracts expire and they go back from Johannesburg to their native hills—where it can be chilly at night—they can go fittingly robed, in the dignity of a Dewsbury blanket.

## Green For Prosperity

Dewsbury's Basutoland customers move merrily with the times; the Eskimo and Chinese clientèle is more conservative. The Chinese Wedding Blanket (reversible) has been going out from the Calder valley to Hongkong for a good many years now and is still, as it has always been, rose on one side, chrome on the other—representing, Dewsbury is given to believe, the Male and the Female, with a green silk edging ("Prosperity") and eleven "stems" or black stripes, each of differing and precisely fixed dimensions, symbolizing fertility and ten other desirable attributes.

Tradition is strong in place as well as products. Despite its size, Wormald and Walkers has somehow managed to remain a private family company. In its early days, like many such undertakings, it was a small banking house, financing, distributing and marketing the blankets made on the handlooms in the villages around. Many cottages with three storeys are still to be seen: the top floor held the loom. Many of the families of those cottage-workers, recorded in the firm's old ledgers, were still figuring on the payroll today, although now, of course, they worked inside the mill.

And Wormáld and Walker's Ten o'clock Gun is still an important Dewsbury institution.

Every night, shortly before ten o'clock, Harry Watson, the night watchman, an old blanket weaver, takes down the Ten o'clock Gun, an ancient blunderbuss and, using a ramrod, fills it with powder and wad. Then he goes out into the mill yard, taking his stand at a point where he can watch the hands of the clock coming up to the hour.

He points the gun skyward. As the clock hand comes on to the dot, he presses the trigger, and the old gun goes off with an echoing boom.

And, in Dewsbury's homes and streets, people hear Wormald and Walker's Ten o'clock Gun and know once again that God's in his Heaven, and his Heaven's full of Yorkshiremen.

## Watches Are Set By It

It is a custom that began during the days of the Luddite rioters, who invaded the mills, smashing the machinery which they felt was responsible for their worklessness. The watchman at the mill—somewhere about the time of the Battle of Waterloo—was given a gun, and told to let it off punctually each night at 10 p.m. as a sign to P. J. Walker's grandfather at his home down the road that the mill was safe and all was well.

The Luddites came and went—but the gun went on. The telephone came, with its instant communication, but in Dewsbury everyone continued to set their watches by Wormald and Walker's gun. The radio came—with its six Greenwich pips. But the gun went on. The talking pictures came, with their Thomson sub-machine guns. But in Dewsbury they merely fitted a new stock to their blunderbuss.

Let London and New York and Batley lust after their atom bombs. Dewsbury—where they know about waste—could want for no bigger or better bang. THE END

*Another article in this series will appear shortly*

## CAPTAIN MILLIGAN'S TANKER

*Continued from page 13*

precautions are taken. "Smoking is absolutely forbidden," says Milligan, "except in places authorised by the captain. A first offence may mean a fine of a month's wages, or even a prison sentence in a civilian court." The main danger comes from free gas drifting about the deck. Hence, when oil is being loaded, gases are drawn from the tanks by a pipe leading to the top of the mainmast.

In several wartime incidents, even petrol showed an unbelievable refusal to explode. On November 5, 1940, the German pocket - battleship Admiral Scheer shelled the tanker San Demetrio. The crew launched boats but next morning only one was within sight of the wreck. Flames and smoke still rose from the San Demetrio, her decks were glowing red, and petrol was pouring out. Ignoring the danger of an explosion, the men in the boat decided to board. For hours they fought the fires and plugged the leaks. Somehow, they sailed the wreck to port with 11,000 tons of her original cargo of 11,200 tons of petrol intact.

The first Shell tanker—the Murex—was built at West Hartlepool in 1892. The man who ordered her, Marcus Samuel—later Lord Bearsted—was the son of the first Marcus Samuel, who founded a company in 1830 to carry on a general trade with the Far East. Among the grain, tea, jute, rice and other raw materials he brought to England were the polished shells popular in Victorian times for decorating knick-knacks. In 1891, the second Marcus Samuel made a contract with a Russian group of refiners for the supply of kerosene.

### Seashell On Flag

The kerosene had to be carried in kegs and Samuel soon sought a cheaper way of moving it. One day he saw on the Caspian Sea a ship which had been specially designed for the bulk transport of kerosene in her own tanks.

Samuel had the Murex built on similar lines. Remembering his former trade in seashells, he included a shell in her houseflag. Today, every tanker is named after a seashell, and has a specimen of the shell exhibited in a glass-fronted oak case built into the bulkhead of the saloon.

During the two wars, tankers became priority targets for U-boats and suffered appalling losses. In the first World War twelve Shell tankers were sunk. Ninety-five were sunk in the second World War. More than eighteen hundred seamen lost their lives, and more than five hundred received awards and official commendations. Milligan himself was torpedoed twice, and received the M.B.E.

By 1957, Shell hopes to build between seventy and eighty new tankers with a carrying capacity of about one and a half million tons. Apart from technical improvements, the new tankers will also have better accommodation for their crews. "Conditions in our tankers are good and improving," said one official. "They have to be—to compete with the more varied life in cargo and passenger vessels." Tankers spend more days at sea than any other ships. Often, oil ports are little more than bleak installations surrounded by desert.

But there are compensations. Milligan likes working in tankers because of the financial security. "We get better pay and a better pension scheme. If anything happened to me, my wife would be provided for."

### Home Once A Year

The minimum monthly wage for a master is £100, and £8 less for a chief engineer. It is common in tankers for a master to be under forty and occasionally under thirty. Food is good, and nowadays home leave is guaranteed at least once a year.

As with all merchant ships, tanker crews are recruited from the Merchant Navy Administration. One deckhand in the Lampania says he likes tankers because he is able to save money. Long voyages and short turn-rounds mean that he has many Sundays at sea, and for each of these he is entitled to an extra day's leave with pay and ration allowance.

"Also," he says, "there's less work than there is in a cargo or passenger vessel. In this particular ship, he shares a small cabin with one other seaman; has his own radio and a small library of books on many different subjects.

Perhaps the greatest attraction for officers is the fact that they can now take their wives to sea with them. Captains and chief engineers may carry their wives at all times, second engineers and chief officers for one complete voyage or one month a year, whichever is the longer, and other officers while the vessel is coasting.

### Wives Get Is. A Month

Mrs. Kay Milligan, who recently spent three weeks in the Lampania during coastal journeys round the British Isles, intends to accompany her husband on a longer voyage when her three children—Deirdre, aged six, Rory, aged three and a half, and Bronagh, aged one and a half—are older and can be sent away to school. "I like it on board," she says. "The longer I stay, the more loath I am to leave."

Technically, wives are members of the crew, signed on at a shilling a month. Actually, they have very little to do. Even the suite of bedroom, bathroom and sitting-room-cum-office is kept clean by stewards. Mrs. Milligan reads, plays cards and darts. Sometimes she worries about the lack of exercise but, unlike Mrs. Embleton, the chief engineer's wife, she does not walk two hundred times round the deck each day.

Neither captain nor loading authorities always know what use will be made of a cargo when it arrives at its destination. For one transatlantic voyage, a captain loaded two different kinds of oil and was told to be particularly careful to keep them apart.

Before loading them, he took elaborate precautions to see that pipes were thoroughly cleaned, and all the way across the Atlantic he was equally careful when taking samples. By the time he reached Britain he was in a state of high nervous tension.

After the greater part of the cargo had been pumped ashore, the captain held back the remainder so that the pipes could be thoroughly cleaned. The shore superintendent, however, had other ideas. "Start pumping the rest," he told them.

The captain pointed out that the rest of the cargo was not to be contaminated under any circumstances. "They told me at the loading port," he added, "that it was very, very special."

The superintendent grinned and jerked a thumb over his shoulder. "See that tank over there? The oils from your ship are wanted for blending. We're going to pump both lots into the same tank." THE END

*THE HUMAN MACHINE*

## Humpty Dumpties

**"WHEN *I* use a word," said Humpty Dumpty to Alice, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." Most people conduct an argument like that.**

**They use a sort of mental shorthand at which the other fellow has to guess. If he does not guess right, the row starts.**

**No argument can be useful unless both sides agree on their definitions. The clearer they are, the easier it is to arrive at the truth.**

*by* ***ROFFE THOMPSON***

fill up and feel the difference

The summer means, among other pleasures, a chance to get out and enjoy the benefit of Shell performance. Young motorists are finding out that Shell — already the favourite brand of older drivers — has built its reputation on results. More and more are discovering that wherever you go in Britain . . .

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PREMIUM

Advertisers Announcement

Reporting on Beauty

# America's latest way to whiten teeth really works

says Barbara North

AMERICA has sent us a new tooth whitener—the discovery of a New York scientist—which goes by the name of decyl-carminate. A new toothpaste containing this "magic" ingredient is now in the shops here, so I have been trying it out. I've been hearing of new tooth whiteners for years, and I've got sceptical, so you can imagine my surprise when I found that this one really *does* work and works *fast*.

I was expecting results—if I expected any at all—in about 3 days, but, after the first time I used it, my husband (who is usually much less observant than I'd like him to be!) said he'd never seen my teeth so white and shining.

## Dentists Approve

I GAVE a tube to a chemist for analysis, and also asked my dentist for his confidential report. The chemist's analysis revealed a paste of tip-top quality, and the dentist informed me that many of his colleagues gave it their blessing, and that he himself had already been recommending it to his patients for several months.

## Half As Much

A TUBE of this toothpaste, costing only the same as ordinary toothpaste, lasts just twice as long. The makers actually *ask* you to use half as much as usual; and, because of this saving, they have named it "Less Toothpaste." That's the name—"LESS." I found that a blob no bigger than a large pea was ample to get snowy white teeth, stains all gone, a beautifully refreshing feeling in the mouth, and the sweetest of sweet breath.

## Ammoniated

AMMONIATED toothpaste, because of its decay-preventing qualities, seems to have gone over in a big way in the U.S.A. So "Less" is ammoniated too. The paste is a very deep pink—almost a burgundy red colour. "Less" is to be found in most shops, but those who haven't yet got it in stock can now easily obtain it.

**Or 1/7½d. sent to Lauraine Laboratories Limited, 4 Star Road London, S.W.6, mentioning *John Bull*, will bring you a tube post free.**

## THE MOMENT OF THE FLYING FISH

*Continued from page 21*

me. What is there about putting up with you?"

"Lost causes. And I fly off the handle."

"You seem like the most phlegmatic Englishman."

"That's because of you."

"I ought to take Susan in now."

"She's fast asleep. Why not leave her? We can put our chairs to the lowest rung and just sit."

"All night?"

"One night."

The new helmsman sang at the rhythm of his work, dirgingly, off tune, to his ship and his companion sea. The wind was not quite steady in the middle of the night; the boom creaked and a loose line slatted, masts swept half a sky to the North Star, back nearly to the Southern Cross, and the sea sparkled a road to the moon which was riding down.

John Coryton and Caroline Smith each had a rum with lime and soda.

"Can you make out the words of what he's singing?" he said.

"It's a silly sad ditty, not worth saying."

"Tell me, Caroline."

*"Oh, Myrtis was my flower and Myrtis was my pride*
*And Myrtis vowed in chapel to be my faithful bride.*
*But Myrtis my darling wore that same white gown*
*When she and Captain Clovis sailed away from town.*

I know some other ones. Shall I say them for you?"

"No."

"John! Tell me what you believe in. I think I know, but tell me."

"I believe in that man at the wheel, my brother."

"Truly?"

"Yes, truly."

"Is it the kind of thing they like you to believe?"

"In theory, yes. In practice, some day. My last governor in Nigeria said: 'Coryton, write *Festina Lente* one hundred times every morning before breakfast.' He was a damned good chap and a surly old bastard."

"It's one of the funny things about you, that you're gentle and you use uncouth expressions."

"I'm not gentle. You don't know me yet."

"What I know tonight is all I shall know."

Caroline Smith looked at her child lying asleep under one rug and on another, and that on top of a tarpaulin folded by the kindly skipper who screamed so fiercely at his crew. She watched the mainmast ride the stars. She thought about Arthur Smith, her good husband.

"Goodbye, moon," she said, when it went.

"Everything grows and dies if it has time for dying."

"And if it has no time?" she asked.

"Then how can it die? It can be perfect always, which is good as well as sad."

"And the moment of the flying fish, dripping drops until it meets a wave. Does that end?"

"No moment ends until it is forgotten."

Now phosphorescence glowed upon the sea. It glowed on the crumble of crests and along the wake and here, sliding past the schooner. Now it glowed at the dark end of night, and you would think and be sure that the sea had a new hissing, phosphorescent voice. She was heavy-laden. Once in a while, when she rolled far over, the scuppers wore that dim light, too. She was a staunch, small ship. Two sailors pumped her out, *sonck, gurgle, splash*. They took a long time. The wind blew fair and fresher for Grenada.

"How long will you be there?" she asked.

"Five days or a week. There's a lady-boat to St. Lucia."

"John, will you promise not to try and see me? And if you see me, just to say hallo?"

"I promise. I shall think of you and the trade wind and the islands."

"Always, John?"

"Yes, although I would never have believed it. That poem Yeats wrote:

*When you are old and grey and full of sleep*
*And nodding by the fire, take down this book. . . .*

Do you know it?"

"I did once, and I will. There's the dawn beginning. How long have we sat here?"

"Fourteen hours in terms of clocks. I'm going to say goodbye, Caroline."

"Now? We won't be there till evening."

"I know. But I want a full stop to remember."

"Somebody is sure to see, John; and they're Grenada people."

"You can risk ten seconds."

"Let me cover Susan's face, then."

"Would she say?"

"She might. It isn't that."

It was the same ebony-black sailor at the wheel, the man who had steered at the beginning. Susan woke up because of tickling rug and no cool breeze.

"Why're you crying, Mummy?"

"Silly child, I'm not. Susan and I are going in now for a while, Mr. Coryton."

They sailed down Carriacou in the Grenadines, and passed a wicked string of reefs, and through a passage called Kick'em Jenny, where wind and water do perennial battle.

The hills were green and steep. The clouds of the trade wind capped Grenada, which is the isle of spices. They sailed under light airs and reached harbour in the evening.

* * *

Sir John Coryton still stood at the sternrail; his island had dropped one hour astern. He walked red-painted plates along the side away from Caroline Smith. On the cabin deck, blowers roared coolish air and engines made a distinctive diesel thump. He put his head round the door. Mary's eyes were closed. She had dispensed with the eau-de-Cologne handkerchief, which was a good sign about her headache. She turned her head.

He closed the door. "How do you feel, Mary?"

"Much better, darling. It's almost stopped. John, I'm sorry I said that about tilting at windmills. You know I didn't mean it."

He did not know that she did not mean it; but he knew that she meant it well. "Of course you didn't. Even if you had, it's true." He kissed her. She had been loyal through every circumstance and always would be.

"I'll rest a little longer and then come up. Have you seen Neil?"

"Not since we came aboard. I expect he's on the boat deck."

SIR JOHN CORYTON, Knight Commander of St. Michael and St. George, Commander of the British Empire, also a Military Cross in the first war, slipped out and went briskly to the place where Mrs. Smith had been. She was still in her quiet corner, still smiling at that witty book. She might have been there for many years.

"Well, Caroline," he said.

She looked at him, casually, then blankly, then with pain and joy. She went pale; her nostrils flared just as he remembered under the mainsail of the Rita G.

"You, John!" she said without armour or pretence. It was a gratifying thing to happen to a man of fifty-two.

"Let's go somewhere."

She stood up and dropped the book, not noting the page and closing it carefully, as Mary would, but face down

open carelessly as one should not leave books. They walked to the stern.

"Your name wasn't on the list."

"We were going to fly. Then my successor arrived earlier, so we. . . . Have you lived in Grenada ever since? Twenty-two years. Do you still remember?"

They leaned on the rail. It would be sunset in a few minutes, sailing east this time, not west. "Yes," she said. "I remember. It's the one time in all my life that I truly do remember. I've always been sad about it and glad about it."

"Me, too," he said. "We had our moment."

"You said that a thing which has no time can be perfect always. And then there was the flying fish. . . . You said all that."

"I seem to have said some ponderous mouthfuls. I don't remember."

She smiled at him. "You're not a woman."

"We might have run away and lived happily ever after."

"No," she said. "The whole of a life wouldn't be as good as that one night sailing nowhere, not when we met too late and not when there were people we were fond of."

"I wish I was sure about things nowadays."

"But you still love that man at the wheel, your brother. I've followed your career, Sir John Coryton."

"It's over," he said. "Or perhaps not. I don't much care. I did what I believed in, but I might have done it better. I'm not a guileful chap."

"You're just the same, except for being quite old, of course."

"And so are you," he said, "except for honourable grey hairs. Can I say safely now what I never said that time?"

"I think you could say it safely," said Caroline Smith, aged forty-eight. "But it would be still safer not to say it."

"I tell you what I do remember:

*Oh, Myrtis was my flower and*
*Myrtis was my pride,*
*And Myrtis vowed in chapel to be*
*my faithful bride.*
*But Myrtis my darling wore that*
*same white gown*
*When she and Captain Clovis*
*sailed away from town.*

Wise Myrtis or foolish Myrtis?"

"I did want to watch for the green flash, and now I can't see it. What an idiot I am. . . . Yes, I did. I'm sure I did. Did you, John?"

"I don't know."

"You might have said you did. But it wouldn't be you to say that."

"I seem to be an open book."

"Once we spent a long time together."

"Yes," he said. "Yes, it was a long time." They turned their backs on the sunset, and leaned elbows against the rail.

Now a man and a girl chanced to come down from the boat deck. They walked light and loose and free as young people do and they talked nineteen to the dozen. "I don't quite agree about that," the boy was saying as they rounded the poop, too absorbed to notice a middle-aged couple.

"That's your son," said Mrs. Smith. "He's like you."

"With your daughter," said Sir John Coryton. "She's your spitting image." He watched them all the way along the deck in failing light. But Caroline was looking at him.

"Well, John," she said. "Wasn't that a strange sight to see?"

"It was indeed," he said with lightness.

They found wife and husband. "I thought I'd lost you altogether, m'dear," said Arthur Smith after introductions. He was round and jolly, and he had been to Eton, an important thing for Mary. "Caroline spends half her life off sailing dream boats."

"My husband is just the same," said Mary.

A pleasant voyage to retirement, and nothing came of it between the younger generation. Which is the way of life. THE END

# Who put the picture of health in this family album?

*When Dad gets overheated he knows what makes the best refresher — a nice glass of Andrews, cool and sparkling.*

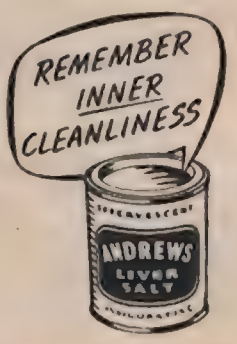
*It was Mother who first brought Andrews home to the family. So naturally she knows where to turn whenever she's off-colour.*

NATURE SMILED ON SHEILA. Gave her a good constitution as well as good looks. But the soundest system sometimes needs a little help — and Sheila gets it from Andrews. Mother wouldn't be without a tin of Andrews in the house, especially at this time of year.

When anyone shows signs of being under the weather Mother has a glass of sparkling, cooling, Andrews ready. She says it's no use taking chances with something as important as your health.

Andrews is a cooling, refreshing, pleasant-tasting drink with a gentle laxative action. Andrews acts on your behalf four ways. Settles the stomach. Freshens the mouth. Tones up the liver. Reminds the system to be regular.

The benefits of Andrews are worth a lot to you and your family.

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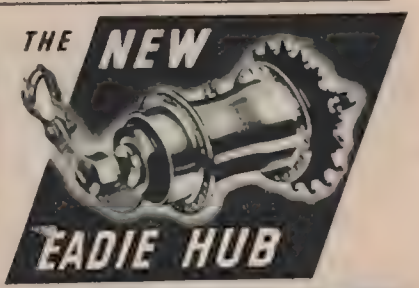

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# LIFE WITH FATHER

IN the first film I directed, *The Maltese Falcon*, my father promised to do a bit part for luck. The part was that of an old sea captain, who comes in at the end of the picture, staggers round the room, mutters something and falls dead. But Father put so much into it he practically demolished the set, crashing over tables with fragile lamps, ornaments and other props. Fortunately the "take" was successful.

However, next day Mary Astor and I decided to play a joke on Father by pretending it had been a failure. She rang him up, saying she was secretary to Jack Warner, of Warner Brothers, the producers, and summoned Father to be on the boss's mat within the hour.

Because my first big chance was involved, Father answered meekly. He drove up to the studio, burst into Warner's office, and apologized, offering to pay for the damage.

"I don't know what you're talking about," the boss said. "All I know is that the shooting's finished, and you weren't bad at all."

In his acting career, Father played every part imaginable, but my earliest memories of him are as an engineer. His father-in-law had won the public utilities of two towns in a poker game, and had made him chief waterworks engineer of Nevada, Missouri. Father knew nothing about engineering, and was studying for his exams by correspondence, when one night a fire broke out in town.

The firemen kept calling for more pressure, and Father kept giving it to them, until the pumps burst under the strain.

He went back to the stage where he belonged. Later, he and Mother separated and, until I was sixteen, I saw him only for about six weeks every year, usually joining him with his theatrical company on tour. For me, those were wonderful vacations; they established the very close bond that developed when I was able to go and live with him altogether.

My earliest ambition was to be a professional boxer, and Father acted as my sparring partner every morning. He was a tough athlete, and later took up tennis at fifty-five and beat his coach in three months.

We pooled the money we made and shared it. We shared our clothes, shared success and failure. I remember an *Othello* he worked on for years before finally producing it in New York. I stayed up all that first night to read the reviews. They were lousy. I hated the thought of showing them to him; but he was reading one of the papers when I went to his hotel room.

He looked up at me, and burst out laughing; and we laughed till tears ran down our cheeks. Years later, I made that laughter the end of *Treasure Of Sierra Madre*, the film which I directed and in which he starred.

I could not imagine an easier man to live with than my father. I cannot remember his calling me to task for anything, ever refusing me any reasonable request, ever being really angry. Both approving or disapproving he smiled, though for the latter the smile was somewhat weak.

Pleasant natured, he did not go along contesting life or his fellows. He never contradicted; and his own opinions were arrived at slowly and with such careful thought that nobody contradicted him, either.

The number of his friends was equalled only by their variety, and to them I owe my first break. I had tried my hand at boxing, acting, rodeo riding, the Mexican Army, painting—and then writing short stories. He showed these to Ring Lardner, the writer, who passed them on to H. L. Mencken, the critic, who published them in the *American Mercury*.

Ever since I was a boy, Father had developed my confidence by asking for and taking my advice during rehearsals; and as soon as he could persuade backers to take a chance with me, I was put to directing him in a play, *Passenger To Bali*. It was undistinguished, but it led to my directing films in Hollywood, and to Father's and my big effort together, *Treasure Of Sierra Madre*.

Father put everything he had into making that a success, even to taking out his teeth to get the character I had written for him.

A journalist friend of mine came to visit us on location in Mexico. She agreed to write up Father and, for a gag, I got her to prepare an alternative article, a thoroughly scurrilous one. This was handed to him by the publicity man.

Father read the article, while we watched the expression change on his face. He was horrified, and an elaborate pretence of cabling Hollywood to suppress it was maintained, until the printable version appeared in the magazine with the full story of Father's discomfiture.

***Who was the famous father of this equally famous son? For their names—and the complete photograph—turn to page 39***

## GIRL ON THE ISLAND

*Continued from page 8*

summer I was out in the fields, haymaking and threshing, and by the autumn of that year I was growing fast.

One day when Eileen caught my wrists, I found, extraordinarily, I didn't have to struggle. I stood quite still and faced her, and with a small movement I broke her hold and grasped her own wrist. She gazed at me for a moment, and then, suddenly, she seemed to go mad, screaming and yelling and kicking me so that I let her go and stared at her, open-mouthed. And the next moment, I caught a skelp round the ear.

"Leave her alone!" Aunt Dora shouted.

"But——"

I got another skelp and ran off, bewildered, protesting, almost in tears but too big to cry.

For a week or two after that, Eileen left me alone, but I was uneasy. Wherever I went, she was watching me.

One night, a mild, brilliant night, Uncle Donal asked me to go and look at a sick cow in the barn.

"I'll come with you," Eileen said. "The lamp needs filling."

She skipped out quickly ahead of me, and I followed more slowly, not liking this, wondering what she was up to. I went into the barn, and it was black after the moon outside. The sick cow moved in the peat.

"Eileen, are you there?"

"I'm here."

"Can't you light the lamp?"

Silence. Against the square of moonlight at the door, I saw her head silhouetted suddenly, and then the door closed.

"Eileen."

"Yes." She was right beside me, so suddenly, so noiselessly, that my heart was up in my mouth. Her hand was on my arm.

"I'm sorry about the other day. It was a mean trick. I'm sorry for baiting you all the time."

"That's all right," I said. I was embarrassed, wary.

"I don't know what made me do it. I suppose you hate me."

"No," I said. "No, I don't hate you, Eileen. All girls are a bit—" I was going to say "a bit queer," but I stopped myself in time.

"You'll know a great deal about girls, I suppose?" she said softly.

I couldn't tell if she was being sarcastic or not, and stood there, awkwardly, not knowing what to say. Just then the cow moved again and mooed mournfully.

"We'd better have a look at the cow," I said quickly.

Her hand left my arm, and a few moments later the barn door opened and when I called her she had gone.

After that, she made my life hell. She would go to any amount of trouble to put me in the wrong, and Aunt Dora always sided with her. But she never laid a hand on me again.

All the same, and Eileen and all, sometimes I loved the place and thought I would stay. In the summer there was always a bowl of cream on the sideboard, and I myself had drawn it, and oatcakes from our own oats, and *crowdie*, which is sour cream. And for breakfast, *brose*, the thick, raw oats made into a stiff dough with boiling water and maybe treacle.

In the clear, blue days out in the fields, or in our boat, with Uncle Donal, I thought: a person would be a fool to want to leave this and compete in a noisy, stinking city. I can stay and own all this, and this is what Uncle Donal, my only relative, wants of me.

THAT was in summer. Winter was different; nothing but salt herrings and potatoes and breaking ice off the water; week after week, month after month.

And the rain would come in through the roof, *plip, plop*, black, treacly drops from the smoke in the thatch, so that you had to burrow in your blankets at night, leaving only your nose out, or you would never sleep.

The only change in the sickening diet was when Aunt Dora made *ceann cropaic*, a fish head, ling maybe, or haddock, stuffed with oatmeal and fish-liver and roe. At first it nauseated me, but it tasted well enough, and after a few weeks of salt herrings and potatoes, I looked forward to it as the rarest dish on earth. And that was how the explosion came.

All the week the weather had been bad and I had become steadily more depressed at the harsh, dreary routine. One day, against all precedent, I went into the house to warm myself. The room was in half darkness, lit only by the firelight. The women were scouring a barrel in the barn. Only Wullie was there, drowsing in front of the fire. His half-shut eyes opened as I slouched into a chair, and his tail began to swing.

It was the first time I'd been alone with Wullie, and I nudged him with my boot out of the front of the fire. He began to hiss. That did it. I planted a heavy boot hard in his ribs, and when he sprang back, snarling, gave him another. He took himself out of the house like a dose of salts. It was the only bright spot of the day, and that soon went when I heard the women leave the barn. I took myself off, too, despising myself for being afraid to be found there.

The next day we had *ceann cropaic* for dinner. It was a bleak, raw day with a wind slamming in off the sea, and Uncle Donal and I were mending a barn door rocked off its hinges. Aunt Dora had taken an early dinner and gone in the dog cart to the port for some buttons she urgently needed, and Eileen was out looking for Wullie. He had not reappeared since I kicked him out. I kept quiet about that. There had been a noisy gale in the night, and Eileen thought he had hidden himself.

The gale had died down, but icy sleet still slanted into the open barn. The door could not be wedged, and I stayed to hold it in the sudden gusts, and get on with the job, while Uncle Donal went in for his dinner. He came back after a while, wiping the fish grease off his mouth. "Go on," he said. "It's out." I went in.

MY dinner was steaming on the table, and I sat down and tore into it, ravenously. I cleaned my plate with my bread, and took a cup of tea from the pot, and then I looked in the iron pot swinging over the fire and saw there was another dinner there.

"Eileen!"

She had come in while I ate, and I could hear her moving about in her bedroom, but she did not answer. Muttering, because she didn't deserve the courtesy, I put out her dinner on a hot plate, and yelled to her. "Come on. It's out." And then I went back to the barn.

Perhaps two minutes later, Eileen came running out. "Where's my dinner?" she shouted at me.

"Your dinner? On the table. I put it out."

"There's no dinner on the table and none in the pot." She was glaring at me and her face was white with anger. Uncle Donal was looking at me.

"I tell you I put it out," I said. "Do you think I've eaten it?"

Neither of them said anything. I opened my mouth, but Uncle Donal cut in quietly: "We'll go and have a look. Bear up on the door, boy."

He put down his tools and I waited there, hanging on to the door in the gusts of sleet, and in a couple of minutes he was back. "There's plenty of herrings and potatoes," he said mildly. "A body need never starve here."

"Did—did you not find the dinner?" I blurted it out and even in my own ears it sounded guilty.

"We did not." His back was to me. "Lift up a wee bit, boy. Now, hold it there." He began hammering.

After a while, in desperation, I said: "Uncle Donal, you don't surely think I took Eileen's dinner?"

"If you say not."

There was hopelessness in talking to

"Perhaps if *you* were to hit *your* thumb, dear . . ."

his back, but I couldn't help myself. "I did not. Why would I do a thing like that? I had my own."

"Ach," he said. "It's no great matter."

Only then did I see that he was divorcing himself from the matter, studiously not interfering. There was a higher judge.

She came back just before tea in the dog cart. I saw the little cart draw up at the door, and my heart began banging furiously. I despised myself for it. All afternoon I had been working myself into a state, dramatizing the scene that would follow. I had been lofty, scornful, witty even, unassailable in my innocence. But now I was scared.

We had finished the door and I was helping Uncle Donal spread fresh peat over the litter in the barn. All the power seemed to have gone out of my arms. I held the fork clumsily. I was trembling.

Eileen appeared in the doorway. "Mother wants to see you."

"I'll be in in a minute," I said, my jaw shaking. "I'm busy now."

"Better go in, boy," Uncle Donal said quietly. "I'll finish off."

It was said in a kindly voice, but more than anything he could have said, it told me I was on my own, abandoned, sent off to punishment. I laid down the fork and followed Eileen.

"Here he is," she said in a hateful, smug voice, as we entered the house.

AUNT DORA was pouring boiling water from the kettle into the teapot. She put down the kettle and looked at me searchingly for a moment.

"Gordon," she said, "you know what I want to see you about."

"Yes," I said. I licked my lips.

"What have you got to say?"

I looked down at my boots, steaming from the peat. "I didn't take her dinner, if that's what you think."

"Look at me, Gordon. Who else could have taken it?"

I looked at her and looked away again. "I don't know. *I* didn't. Maybe she ate it herself." It was a possibility I'd already thought about, but I knew it wasn't feasible. There just wasn't time for her to eat it.

There was a sharp, indrawn breath from Eileen. "Well! D'you hear that, Mother?"

There was a long pause. "Gordon, are you accusing Eileen of sinfully and wilfully telling a lie?"

"That's what she's accusing me of," I mumbled.

"Eileen is not accusing you of anything. She wants to know what happened to her dinner, and I want to know. Do you believe Eileen ate it and said she hadn't to get you into trouble?"

"She might have."

"Do you think she did? Look me in the eye, Gordon."

I tried to look her in the eye again but it was no good. "No," I said.

"Well then, if you don't think Eileen ate it, and you say you didn't yourself—do you think Uncle Donal took it?"

"No."

There was another long pause, and when she spoke again her voice was high-pitched in anger. "Is it robbers you're thinking took it, then?"

I looked down at my boots and all the fine phrases had gone, and I was nearly crying. All I could think of was: *Why did they have to die? Why did they have to die and leave me to these people?*

Aunt Dora sighed and said, after a moment, in a curbed voice: "Ah, Gordon, what are we to do with you? We've taken you in and made you welcome. If you're hungry you know you're at perfect liberty to go to the press. . . ."

"I wasn't hungry," I said. "I tell you I didn't take it."

"It's not the food," she said. "And it's not just that you seem to want to hurt Eileen. The Lord made us as we are. But I will have the truth. There is no place for deceit in this——"

"I am so telling the truth!" I cried, and suddenly I was over a hurdle and into my second wind. It was funny. For months I had not dared to think of my parents and the warmth of our life together in the city. But now, in distress, I opened a corner of my mind, and a rich flood of strength seemed to flow into me. I remembered our home, and my father coming in to his supper from the garage where he worked and telling me about motor cars, and my mother cooking, all the dozens of dishes she knew, and the dozens of games she could play, and the family jokes we had. And all at once I saw this affair of Eileen's dinner as the horrible joke it was, the woman and the girl watching me, myself standing before them in my great steaming clodhoppers like some poor condemned idiot.

I FELT my cheeks flushing, and then I was not short of words. "What sort of people are you!" I bawled in the sudden pause, and I saw the pair of them start a little. "What sort of people to fancy I would steal someone else's dinner! That's an animal thing to do. That's what you put me at, and that's what you are yourselves—animals, snuffling around with your noses at the ground and pushing one another aside, and coming to the trough. I wouldn't stay here among you if it was the last place on earth. I've got more respect for myself. . . ." I went on to say a great deal more.

Indeed, I couldn't stop myself. All my discontent, all my grief for my parents was suddenly turned outwards in joyous rage. I listened to myself in surprise. With every word I seemed to

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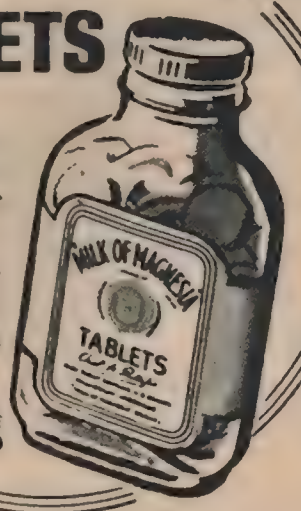


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expand, mentally as well as physically; I was like one of my father's engines, revving up after standing cold, vibrating with power and with more held in check.

I was so preoccupied with this inward look at myself that I did not at first notice that the two of them were no longer staring at me, but at a point beyond me. When I did, I turned round, and there was Uncle Donal, with a pinched look on his face.

He said nothing, and at another time I would have felt so ashamed I would have slunk away. But now I was a different person. I felt indefinably older than my Uncle Donal; more responsible, more experienced. I put my arm round his shoulder like an elder brother, and I loved him and pitied him at that moment.

"Uncle Donal," I said, "I'm sorry you heard that. It was not meant for you."

He shook my arm off roughly, and went out.

Then my Aunt Dora found her voice. "You'll go," she said in a rush, her mouth trembling. "I could never forget that. You'll have to go."

I OPENED my mouth to tell her contemptuously that I had already made the decision, but I did not speak the words. For the first time I felt love for her, too; I felt godlike, all-powerful in my love and compassion for them, grubbing their few acres, the hard, narrow life, salt herrings all the winter. I said kindly: "I'm sorry, Auntie," and that was the first time I had ever called her that.

Then I, too, went out. I did not go back to the barn. I took my oilskins and bent myself against the driving sleet and walked to the headland. The sea was grey and bleak, a picture of cold desolation. But it could not damp my spirits. I seemed to draw fresh energy from the buffeting, knife-edge wind. I stood there, almost incandescent with exultation and the feeling of power. I had the heady, dream feeling that if I jumped off the cliff I could plane down *or up*—up even!—the complete master of myself and my environment. I had made a decision, my first big decision, and it had left me free as a bird.

It was dark when I went back, and they had started dinner without me. I washed and took my seat, and ate my salt herrings and potatoes, and the food tasted differently, almost as if I were a stranger to it. It was a silent, heavy meal. Once or twice I caught Eileen's eyes; her expression was stony, but not triumphant. There was a suspicion of half-regret, half-fear, as when a person has gone too far in a quarrel but cannot retract; which, I suppose, is what had happened.

Everyone went off to bed soon after dinner, and I was left alone. Some of the wildness had gone out of me, but I still felt free as air and full of wonderful promise. I tried now to think what I would do. My first step would be to write to Mr. Henderson, the man who owned the garage where my father had worked. He had been very good after the funeral, and had paid my fare to Quist.

I sat trying to control my excitement by listing all the misfortunes that could happen, and then Aunt Dora called out from her bedroom: "Will he never turn down the lamp? Maybe he thinks oil costs nothing?" She must have seen the light under the door.

I made my bed on the couch and undressed and turned down the lamp and lay down, gazing into the dying fire, and after perhaps five minutes Eileen came into the room. I heard the slow, furtive raising of the latch to her door and the soft rustle of her bare feet on the floor. It was the first time she had come to my room since that night a couple of days after I arrived. I shut my eyes.

"Are you asleep, Gordon?"

I didn't answer.

"Gordon. . . . Gordon, why ever did you do it? I didn't want it to come to this."

Something about her voice made me open my eyes and shift round to look at her. She was crying.

"We could have got on fine. I only teased you since you came to see what like you were. There is no need for you to go."

I whispered: "I can't stay. I couldn't stay now even if I wanted to, Eileen. It's not my doing."

"I would never have told on you if I'd known. . . . Indeed, you don't have to go. I'll make it all right. I'll make it all right in the morning. What life is there for me here?"

"I can't stay."

"I'll say—I'll say I ate the dinner myself."

I looked at her with interest. I'd forgotten about the dinner. "Is that what happened? Did you eat it?"

She looked at me sorrowfully. "You know I didn't. You took it yourself."

"Good night." I lay down.

"Gordon, listen to me."

"I'm tired. We'll talk about it in the morning."

"Then make me a promise. Make it now. Say you won't go if I make it all right."

She waited a few moments, but when I did not answer, she gave a little sigh, and I heard the latch click again.

She must have made up her mind that it was no good, though, for next day she did not speak to me. Wullie had come back in the night, and she addressed all her remarks to him, going round with a cold little face.

And that was really the end of it. I heard from Mr. Henderson after a few days. He was willing to take me on as an apprentice, and Mrs. Henderson had room for me at their home. I left three weeks later, and within a few months I had almost forgotten the island and all the unhappy times there. But I could not forget Eileen and the mystery of her dinner. I never did get to the bottom of that. . . .

NOT for forty years, until I came back from Miss Marks's confidential files and sat down and reached for a sandwich, and the sandwiches had gone, and the little movement—the little furry movement—and the memory of the roe brought it back to me.

For fully a minute, I sat back and rocked with laughter, great gusts of laughter, sheet-lightning laughter that the psychiatrists say is just this side of hysteria, a relief for the system.

The little cat sat and watched me, pausing, with one paw raised, from his after-lunch wash. It was a handsome little cat, smarter, perkier than that terrible old Wullie; and yet not so smart. I had not seen hide or hair of Wullie that day, but Wullie had seen me; had watched and waited, somewhere in the thatch maybe, and bolted Eileen's dinner.

It had never occurred to me. It had never occurred to any of them. They had sooner believed that I had taken the dinner instead of the cat. . . .

READILY, the little cat came to me. I had him in my arms, stroking him, when Miss Marks came in, breathless. "Oh! Oh, Mr. Fraser! The naughty little. . . . I'm so sorry. I've been searching everywhere. . . . I know you don't like cats."

She was pink with confusion, her eyes moist and almost ready for tears. She had entered the cat for a show; she had planned to take him to the groomers at lunchtime, but my sudden burst of activity had ruined that. She knew I disliked cats; she had discreetly kept him hidden in his basket, but somehow, in some way, she couldn't think how it could have happened, when she had gone to fetch my sandwiches. . . .

Miss Marks reached out for the cat, but he seemed to have taken a fancy to me. "Leave him a little while," I said. "Bring me some milk for him . . . he'll need something to wash down my lunch."

"Your lunch! Oh, Mr. Fraser!" For the first time Miss Marks realized what had happened.

"That's all right," I said "He's very welcome." And he was, too. I had been full of despair and self-doubts, and a cat had precipitated me from the island to a future that was full and rich. I had been full of despair and self-doubts again, and a cat had taken me back to that time.

To hell with Malindine! I thought. To hell with a hundred Malindines. There is still me.

So Miss Marks brought me the milk, and I smiled at the cat, and then I smiled at Miss Marks. "Do you know, Miss Marks," I said, "if it wasn't for a cat. . . ."

THE END

## BLOOD IS THE FEE

*Continued from page* 11

felt he needed it. Ivens knew that, and didn't say anything.

Mtembe came hurrying in and began to lay the table for lunch.

McDermott leaned back in his chair and shut his eyes. "You know," he said quietly, "I sometimes wonder why I go on with this tobacco business. If I had half the guts I used to have, I would have packed this nonsense up long ago and let the government stew in the muddle."

"It's not your fault we haven't done well here," Ivens said. "Who was to know we were going to get these frightful droughts two years running?"

"They ought to have known the risks they were taking when they started here. They never made a proper survey. Those fellows they sent out from home had a quick look round, selected the site, and then old Colonial hands like me were pulled out of their jobs to take over. They ought to have known beforehand that this was a dry belt, that it is touch-and-go whether you get the right air currents to bring up rain from the coast. Instead of which they spend thousands on accommodation for labour and on giving them film shows and goodness knows what. This rainmaking outfit is the last straw."

"I think you're unduly pessimistic, Mac," said Ivens. "If we get rain now we'll be all right. It's not too late in the season. Let these Yanks bring up their plane and their pellets and they'll probably pull it off. I was with the G.I.s in West Africa during the war. They are wonders of efficiency."

McDermott didn't answer. He was silent throughout lunch.

Down in the village old Mulanga, the witch-doctor, waited for his friend, Mtembe. It was getting late, nearly midnight, and the old man had begun to suspect his friend had deserted him. Nevertheless he had kept the fire going outside his hut in case Mtembe came back. It was quiet in the village and, as Mulanga thought, a good night for talking.

All about him in the bright moonlight were the sprawled bodies of sleepers, for it was too hot to stay in the huts. Occasionally the shrill, human cry of a bushbaby came down to him from the Msasa belt. He wondered what was keeping Mtembe. These fireside talks far into the night with his friend were all that sustained the witch-doctor in his sorrows. On their account he could even forgive Mtembe for taking a job at the tobacco station.

He hated the government men and their tobacco station. Their coming had changed everything for him. Now he was no longer a man of importance in the village, counsellor of the chief, messenger between the people and Mwara, their god, guiding them in the ways that Mwara demanded. Many of the villagers had gone to work on the tobacco station and made friends with the Africans from the south. All their talk now was of these men from the south who had seen the great cities. Even the chief no longer listened to him, but wore a hat and rode a bicycle like the southerners.

Lately they had taken to laughing at Mulanga as he walked between the huts and teasing him because he wore the uniform of his calling, the leopard skin and the dozen wild-cat tails dangling round his skinny legs. They even laughed at his medicines, too, for they went to the government store for their medicines now.

Mulanga, watching Mtembe picking his way over the sleeping bodies, felt a sudden warmth inside him at sight of the familiar figure.

"You are late," Mulanga greeted him.

"There was work to do tonight. The new government men have come, men I have not seen before," Mtembe explained.

"What men are these?" the witch-doctor demanded.

Mtembe crouched down on his haunches in front of the fire, took out his pipe and lit it slowly. He puffed out blue smoke, but he did not answer the other's question.

"The white men are worried," he said.

"Worried?"

"Yes, old one. You know there has not been rain for a long time. If there is no rain then the tobacco dies."

"Then," said Mulanga, "it will be good if no rain comes. Perhaps if the tobacco dies there will be no more government men here."

"But you forget," said Mtembe, "if the white men go, there will be no work for us in the village."

"There was work enough before they came," said the witch-doctor. "There were crops to grow and cattle to rear. These things our people have neglected since the govenment men came."

"Yes, that is true, but if there is no rain then we shall starve."

Mulanga did not reply to that and for a minute they were silent. Mtembe drew strongly on his pipe. Then the


# ABOVE US THE WAVES

THE daring wartime exploits of the Royal Navy's human torpedoes and midget submarine crews—told fully for the first time

***Beginning in John Bull, August 1***

witch-doctor, remembering what the other had told him, asked again, "Who are these new government men, Mtembe?"

"They say they have come to make rain here."

"To make rain!" Mulanga stood up suddenly, his mouth gaping. "No, Mtembe, you joke with me."

"It is what they said, old one."

"Then they have brought a witch-doctor from the south when there is already a witch-doctor here, who is the only rainmaker, who is the only one who can plead with Mwara for rain. I am here—Mulanga. There can be no other witch-doctor here."

"I saw no witch-doctor," said Mtembe. "These new government men are white men."

Mulanga was confused. Mtembe must be mistaken. White men do not bring rain. They have many wonderful things like talking boxes, but they do not bring rain. He sat for a long time pondering what Mtembe had told him, and even after his friend had rolled on his side and gone to sleep, the old witch-doctor sat on in front of the now dying fire, wondering at what Mtembe had told him. He had no wish to bring rain for the government men, who were his enemies, but surely he was the chief's rainmaker, and only he could invite the wedding of earth and sky in this his chief's country.

ON the veranda of his bungalow the District Commissioner was having breakfast. There was not much to it, just cups of black coffee. It had been a snorter of a party. Why did Americans always have such quantities of whisky wherever they went? There was no question of dilution, no soda, no water. For professional rainmakers they were singularly uninterested in water when it came to sundowner time, he thought. Just one straight snort after another. The Commissioner had a headache.

His servant stood nearby waiting to be noticed.

"Yes?"

"Mulanga, the witch-doctor, wishes to see you, sir."

"What's he want?"

"He did not say, sir."

"All right, tell him to come round here."

Surely there had been no trouble in the village? For years it had been the best-behaved village in his district. That had been due mainly to the influence of the reigning chief's father, one of the fairest of his kind. The son had not turned out to be quite like his father, too lazy, too many wives and not much interested in his people. There was the touch of the dandy about him, too, and since the establishment of the tobacco station the government store had become the main interest in his life. Mulanga's influence, the commissioner noticed, had declined with the death of the old chief. He felt sorry for the witch-doctor; there was far less guile and craftiness about him than was usual with his kind, but the new African had no place for witch-doctors. Their talents could not compete in the eyes of the people with those of the European.

The commissioner watched him as he came round the side of the bungalow, walking slowly as if in pain and with bent head. If only they would give up their ridiculous dress, he thought, watching the tails swinging between Mulanga's skinny legs.

The witch-doctor waited at the top of the steps.

"Well, Mulanga, what is it?"

"I would like to speak with you, Commissioner baas," he said mournfully.

"Then speak."

"It is of the new government men," said Mulanga. "It is said in the village they come here to bring rain. But how can this be? I am the rainmaker here. Last year you remember, Commissioner baas, when the rains were late I held the sacrifice for Mwara. I let the blood run for Mwara. There was no other rainmaker."

The commissioner was puzzled. He sipped his coffee slowly, giving himself time to think. This was a type of

"Any luck?"

professional jealousy he had not encountered before.

"Yes, Mulanga," he said. "I also remember there was a big trouble for killing cattle without permission. You know slaughtering of cattle is an offence here."

"There must be sacrifice for rain, Commissioner baas. It is demanded by Mwara. If the government men want rain I am ready to bring it."

"No, Mulanga, they have other ways of bringing rain."

"What ways?"

"There are ways known to white men. You would not understand if I tried to tell about these ways. They are not trying to take away your job. It is nothing to do with you. Your place is in the village among your own people. They have come here with their flying machine to bring rain for tobacco. They do not come here to interfere in your village.

"Then the rain will fall only on the tobacco and not on the village?" Mulanga felt suddenly cheered.

"I cannot say with truth, Mulanga, that it will fall on the tobacco station. I cannot say that it will fall at all, but you must not worry about these things. It is the affair of the government men."

"Everything is the affair of the government men," Mulanga said, raising his voice angrily. "First it is medicines they bring, and now it is rain they make." He added sadly, "There is little now that a witch-doctor can do."

"There is much you can do, Mulanga," the commissioner told him kindly. "You are an old man of wisdom. You have been counsellor to several chiefs. You can urge your people to work harder, to live better."

"They do not listen to me now, Commissioner baas. They laugh at me and they will laugh louder when they see I am no longer the rainmaker."

The commissioner looked at his watch. There was no point in going on.

"Have you finished speaking?" he asked.

"I have finished, baas."

"Then go well, Mulanga."

"Stay well, Commissioner baas."

AFTER the first week of experiment, no rain had come, only a lot of cynical comment from McDermott. Obviously it was not as easy as the Americans had imagined. But Harvester, their meteorologist, was still hopeful and had various methods still untried.

The American party consisted of four, two airmen and two meteorologists, one of whom was also a radio expert, and they were all accommodated in the new bungalow behind the government offices, where McDermott and Ivens lived.

The trouble from the beginning was with the air currents.

"I can't make it out, Mac," Harvester said. "According to all our records you should have strong vertical currents here. You've certainly got them a couple of hundred miles to the south."

"Is that why your charcoal burners have failed?" asked McDermott.

"Sure it is. The cloud's all right. The cloud's fine, great wads of cumulus just waiting for treatment, and we've got the treatment. But what happens? We fix the charcoal with silver iodide, start the furnaces to set the silver iodide smoke going up into the clouds, but the smoke never reaches the clouds. These strong currents should take it straight up to 1,500 feet above freezing point, where they can get busy forming snowflakes and hence rain. But you can't trust these currents. Our smoke is going miles out of course."

"How's that?"

"It's bunchy stuff, this cloud here, not what we're used to back in the States, and time after time Nash has found the smoke's getting taken up in air pockets between bunches of cloud, instead of moving slowly up into the cloud itself. It's chancy business, this rainmaking, Mac."

"That's what I've always thought," said McDermott. "It's a chance in a million, as far as I can see. All I know is that this tobacco will be a dead loss if we don't get rain somehow soon."

"Oh, we'll get it all right, brother, don't you worry yourself about that. It's just a matter of finding the best method to suit these darned air currents. I've got an idea which I think may yet do the trick. Back home they're still experimenting with it. It's more violent but it has been known to get results in special circumstances like these. Come out to the shed and have a look at the stuff."

McDermott followed the American across the yard to the shed where they kept their gear. It was a hot, stuffy night. McDermott thought for a moment that rain might come of its own accord, but he had been in Africa too long to be betrayed by hot, sultry nights. They were a snare and a delusion. There was too much of the woman about rain in Africa. Too damned fickle, too damned passionate at the wrong time. The commissioner was right about rain, he thought. It was a courtship that was needed, the sort of thing the African witch-doctor did, not a stand-and-deliver order given by a lot of crazy scientists with too many facts and too few fancies.

Inside the shed, McDermott was not so sure there was much difference between the scientists and the witch-doctors. Here was a magician's shop containing odd-looking liquids in bottles, burners and test-tubes, and all the other paraphernalia of the make-shift laboratory. He watched Harvester bring down a package from a shelf.

"This is it," he said, unwrapping the package. "They're grenades or small charges. Just plain gunpowder for the most part, but we've got it impregnated with silver iodide. We lam them into the cloud and there will be no time for tricky air currents to do anything."

"Yes, but how can you be sure they will explode at the right time?" asked McDermott.

"Oh, they have a fuse, of course—a time-fuse which we set on our knowledge of the clouds. Usually we set them to explode at a freezing level of about fifteen thousand feet."

"More magic," commented McDermott.

"Magic," echoed Harvester. "This ain't magic, brother, it's science."

"All right, call it what the devil you like. I don't care as long as you produce some results. All I want to see is rain coming down in bloody torrents."

"It's all on tap, don't worry yourself about that, Mac. We'll just get those little taps turning if it's the last thing we do."

"When do you start this aerial trench warfare?"

"In the morning, I think. I'll be up early and get up a pilot balloon to see what sort of speed those little clouds are making. As a rule we don't use a plane in this sort of game. We usually send the grenades up attached to balloons, but I think we'll have to use a plane here. I've discussed it with Nash and he's agreeable. He'll take Davies up with him to watch the time fuses and get them to synchronize with the plane's altitude instruments. You'll be using an umbrella tomorrow night, Mac."

McDermott wasn't impressed. "I'll believe it when I see it, and not before."

MCDERMOTT slept badly. It was hot and airless when he went to bed, and, although his bed was under the window and he lay with only a sheet covering him, he could not get to sleep for a long time.

When he awoke, the curtains were moving about in the windows and he found he was shivering. He sat up in bed and peered out. It was already light and a cool breeze was blowing up the valley.

There was a sudden sharp stab of pain in his left shoulder which sent him rigid, and for a minute he wondered what had happened. Then he realized it was his old war wound, the ugly mark across his shoulder, that had caused it. He had almost forgotten what that pain had been like, for it was years since the wound had troubled him. He could never stand a damp winter in England because of it.

Perhaps it was a good omen for Harvester, he thought, a chance for rain, but more likely it was through sleeping in a draught.

He shut the window and began to dress. The fall in temperature was unmistakable. He went out on the veranda and looked at the thermometer. It was down to sixty. He wondered what it meant. The clouds were down low in the valley as if they were in for a kind of Scotch mist, or *guti* as they called it, with visibility down to a few yards, but it was the wrong time of year for a *guti*.

He put on a sweater over his khaki shirt and began to walk down to the airstrip. From the house he could hear the engines of the plane turning over, but the machine itself was hidden in the mist. He found all four Americans

on the strip. Harvester was talking excitedly to Nash. Then he saw McDermott.

"Morning, Mac," he said. "We're just about ready. We're starting early while the going's good."

"What do you make of this?" asked McDermott, pointing up to the sky. "Don't you think we might get a natural rain out of it?"

The American laughed and made an expansive gesture.

"This haze is nothing at all Mac. You always get it after sudden drops in temperature. When the sun gets up higher it will be gone in a half-hour. Suits us, though. We'll get into the upper cloud right now and give it the works."

McDermott, listening as Harvester gave his instructions, could not but admire the way these Americans tackled things. There was so much enthusiasm, so much life in them, and they were not easily discouraged.

When he left them to return to the office, the plane was taxi-ing down the runway. Then it rose up slowly, confidently, and he lost it in the mist.

HARVESTER was wrong. The mist did not lift, and, after a brief appearance, the sun disappeared and there was a strange gloom over the valley.

The Americans did not return at lunch-time, and McDermott began to wonder what had happened.

He went down to the airstrip where Raybould, the American radio man, had his set in a small hut. Harvester, sitting in earphones next to Raybould, took his phones off.

"Can't make it out, Mac. We've lost contact. Everything was all right up till an hour ago, then fade-out."

"Any theories?"

"I can't guess what's happened. They ran down on the southerly course all right, reported their bombs away and gave the usual reports. Apparently it's quite clear above these clouds. It's this darned mist that worries me. It ought to have lifted hours ago. I've met nothing like this in the States."

"It's the African *guti*," said McDermott. "It's unpredictable."

Raybould broke into sudden speech. "Baccy calling Peter two three, Baccy calling Peter two three. I am hearing you, go ahead, go ahead."

There were several short exchanges, then Raybould signed off.

"They had a short circuit in the set," he said. "It's O.K. now, but they're not sure of their position. If only we had the right gear we could get them in on a beam. They've been flying round in circles for ages. It's this mist that's worrying them. Nash says he is going to get down now even if he's got to crash it. He feels it's no darn good waiting for this mist to clear, and suggests we get some fires lighted to give him some idea of the position of the strip."

"Fires. Of course, it's the obvious thing," said Harvester. "Can you fix it, Mac? Two or three good blazes will do. I'll hang on here in case they come through again."

"I see you drank your medicine like a good trouper"

McDermott ran back to the office, met Ivens on the way and told him to collect men and get the fires going. He himself sent Mtembe into the location to round up anyone off duty.

The fires had been going for over an hour before they heard the sound of the aircraft overhead. It grew louder and they waited, expecting to see it appear out of the mist, but the noise of its engines tailed off. Several times the same thing happened, as if Nash were coming down on the same course each time and then overshooting the strip. Backwards and forwards he went. Once he came through on the radio, asking for more information about the position of fires. Then there was silence again and they heard neither radio nor aircraft.

THEIR necks and eyes were becoming sore with craning and peering. Harvester was biting his nails. McDermott kept easing his shoulders backwards and forwards, trying to stop the pain of his wound. Ivens had brought up the jeep and sat at the wheel, keeping the engine turning over. Now and again he accelerated slightly, and it got on McDermott's nerves.

"For God's sake, Ivens!" he said. "How the hell do you think we'll hear anything with you playing with that bloody engine?"

Ivens switched off but continued to sit at the wheel. Then he took up a pair of field glasses and fidgeted with them. Once or twice he made a sweep through the sky as if he thought he might see something, but there was only the grey swirling mist in his lenses. Then there *was* something in the glasses. He was looking down low over the tarmac and there was a figure running towards them.

The others saw him almost at the same time, before Ivens could say anything. It was one of the African tobacco boys. He was breathless when he reached them and his face was grimy with dust and smoke.

"It's over there," he said. "It's over there," and he pointed up to the hillside on the other edge of the valley.

Ivens had the jeep going and they clung to it as it bumped over the uneven ground beyond the airstrip.

It was like a wounded hawk, the boy told McDermott. It had swooped down on them and they had thrown themselves on their faces. But the bird had roared like a lion when it had struck the ground, he said. Now it was burning.

On the rising ground the jeep was not fast enough for McDermott. He jumped off and the others followed, all except Ivens, who persevered because the jeep carried the emergency equipment. The crash was barely half a mile from the outer bonfire. Nash must have misread the signal and come in on the hill side instead of the valley side of the fire. They pushed their way through the chattering crowd that encircled the plane at a safe distance. There were voices in the fire, they said, and they were angry. McDermott and Harvester closed in, but suddenly there were three short explosions.

"Look out!" yelled Harvester. "The grenades!"

Realizing what the natives meant by voices, they backed to safety again.

"It's hopeless," said McDermott grimly.

The fire was already burning out. There had not been much of the plane left to burn. Pieces of its structure lay scattered on the hillside; only the shell was left. When they were able to go forward they could see that the crash itself must have killed the crew.

Harvester kept to his room in the afternoon after giving Raybould a long message to go by wireless to the Department.

He was deeply shocked by the crash, feeling that he was somehow responsible. He arranged for a party to go out with stretchers and for a proper burial. The Father at the Swedish mission said he would come over.

When the rain came, about an hour before dusk, it came almost imperceptibly, almost apologetically. There was no clap of thunder, no great round drops of water falling on the dust, but only a drizzle, fine and scarcely wetting, like water from a delicate garden sprinkler.

Harvester, working mechanically at his charts in his room, watched without any satisfaction the gentle wetting of his window panes and he checked the time on his watch. That the rain would come he had no doubt, but it was late, nevertheless, and not as strong as it ought to have been after the silver iodide treatment. He believed it was another success, but somehow he could get no satisfaction out of it. That ghastly accident. He had never had an accident before.

MCDERMOTT walked with the commissioner to the end of the station road. On both sides the tobacco was wet, but only enough to wash the dust off the leaves.

"It's a rum time to have a *guti*," said the commissioner, "but I agree with you, it certainly is a *guti*, this horrible mist and dampness. Let's hope it lasts long enough to save your crop."

McDermott wondered which he wanted most—to save the crop or to stop the pain in his shoulder.

Up on the hillside where the plane had crashed, the crowd of tobacco boys had dispersed, now that the burial party had done their work. Even the bonfires, whose signal had been so tragically misread, had burnt out. But a small fire was still alight about a hundred yards from the charred wreckage of the plane. And two figures stood by it, one of them feeding the fire from time to time with pieces of wreckage which he had conscientiously collected from the hillside. Then he would throw on a handful of dust from a bottle which he carried, and the flames would burn blue. Finally even that fire burned out and Mulanga and Mtembe turned back towards the village.

"The anger has gone out of Mwara," said the witch-doctor. "There has been sacrifice and there has been fire. Here, Mtembe. Feel how good is the touch of rain." THE END

## IN THE WET

*Continued from page* 16

knew everything that was going on, and she must have known of this for weeks and weeks, perhaps even when they were in Ottawa. No wonder she was looking white and strained.

The shock to the British people would be immense. Under that shock, a few small sections of the people might well lose their heads, behave wildly and do foolish things. There would be sections of the British people who would turn against the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth that had seduced their Queen away. Strong hatreds would arise, and ugly things might happen. An Australian aeroplane might be exposed to sabotage.

David knew that in a week or so England would settle down and would regain her traditional balance, but anything might happen in the first few days.

He thanked God for the warning Rosemary had given him, for the wisdom of the Australian naval officer that had given him the sailors as a guard for the machine against a danger that he had not understood himself and that he could not have explained. His duty was to keep the aircraft safe and efficient, with its crew, ready to take the Queen wherever she wished to go.

He shook himself, and went to bed, troubled and depressed. It was his duty to protect himself, his crew and his machine against anything their opponents might do.

Next day was Saturday, the day before Christmas Eve. At ten o'clock he got a telephone call from Frank Cox asking him to come to London, to St. James's Palace.

He went into the office in Engine Court an hour later. Frank Cox was waiting for him, and he closed the door carefully behind the Australian. "They're leaving for Canberra on the evening of Christmas Day, Nigger," he said. "Is that going to be all right with you?"

The pilot nodded: everything that he had heard in the last few days had led him to expect this. "We'll be right," he said. "What time do they want to go?"

"What time is best for them?"

"Any time would suit us," David replied. "Do they want to stop in Colombo?"

"Not this time," said the Group Captain. "They owe Ceylon a visit, and they're planning to go there for a fortnight or three weeks in February. But she's altogether too tired now for that. She wants to go straight through to Tharwa and rest there for a time."

The Australian nodded. "Allowing an hour for refuelling at Ratmalana, if we took off at nine o'clock, after they've had dinner, we'd get to Canberra about four in the morning. I told her that once before, and it's probably the most restful way for her to tackle it. But we can take it any way she likes."

Frank Cox said, "She's doing her broadcast at three in the afternoon, as usual. She's going to speak for about twenty minutes. Philip wants to get her away fairly soon after that. How

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**IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK**

would take-off at six o'clock suit you?"

"Suit me all right," the pilot said. "We'd refuel at Ratmalana about breakfast time and get to Canberra about one in the morning. It would be dark then, of course. We couldn't have the fighter escort that they like to give her."

"She doesn't want it, Nigger. Not this time. She doesn't want any ceremonial at all. She's a very tired woman."

David nodded. "It might be rather a good thing for us to put down at one in the morning," he remarked. "Not many people will turn out at Fairbairn in the middle of the night."

"No. I'm seeing Philip this afternoon, and I'll suggest take-off at six o'clock on Christmas evening. Now, how little notice do you have to give your crew?"

"How little?"

"Yes, for security. It's very important that nothing of this should leak out before."

The pilot stood in thought for a minute. "I'd like to have Shell check our fuel again before the flight," he said. "Pump it all out and pump it in again, like they did before. If they start on that on Christmas morning they'll be finished by dinner. I could warn the crew then, and send them back to get their gear. That's enough notice for them." He paused. "There's the food, of course."

"I'll see to the food." The group captain stood in thought for a minute. "Too bad if anything happened to the crew," he said. "Could you send them all round together in a truck, with two or three of your Australian ratings with them? Let them go to each man's lodgings in turn?"

DAVID nodded. "I'll think up something on those lines. Leave it with me, sir. I'll have the machine and the crew in readiness for take-off at six o'clock. We don't have to tell them before dinner time." He paused. "Luggage at about five thirty?"

Frank Cox nodded. "I'll be having the whole party assemble at the Palace with their luggage. Send it all down together."

"How many in the party?"

"Identical with the last Canberra trip. Eight persons and myself."

"Miss Long coming this time?" He could not resist that.

"Oh yes—she's coming."

They talked for a little longer about the practical details of the flight, and then David took his leave. As he was going out of the door, Frank Cox said, "Oh, by the way—have you seen the *Sun*?"

"No."

The group captain turned to his desk, and opened the paper in the middle. There was a very large picture of David, looking rather annoyed, striding down a Maidenhead pavement to fetch his car. Underneath was the caption: *"WHERE WOULD HE BE GOING TO? Wing Commander Anderson, R.A.A.F., of the Queen's Flight."*

David looked at it in silence for a minute.

"Not much secrecy about our movements now," he said.

"I know," said Frank Cox wearily. "But we've got to go through the motions."

In Engine Court David hesitated, irresolute, wondering whether to ring up Rosemary and try to make a date with her for dinner. In the end he decided to leave her alone; with only two days to go she would be working at top pitch and an interlude with him would only upset her at a time when she could not afford to be upset. He took a taxi from the bottom of St. James's to Shell House and found an official in the Aviation department keeping watch over the holiday, and through him he arranged for the work down at White Waltham upon Christmas morning.

He drove down to the aerodrome and warned the crew for a day-long inspection of the aircraft on Sunday. That day they worked from morning till evening, Christmas Eve, and found nothing wrong. They left the Ceres all night guarded by the sailors, and on Christmas morning they returned for the work of emptying the fuel, analysing it, and refuelling.

At midday the Shell employees drove away in their empty tank wagons to a belated Christmas Day, and David assembled his crew in the fuselage of the aircraft, with the door shut.

"We're going home this evening, boys," he said. "Take off at six o'clock, with the Queen on board, via Ratmalana."

He told them of the arrangements he had made for them to collect their gear. "I want the truck back here by a quarter to three, and after that nobody's to leave the hangar."

Flight Sergeant Syme said, "Can we listen to the Queen speaking, Cap?"

He nodded. "There's a radio in the office. We'll listen to it all together there."

That afternoon they assembled in the bare, utilitarian little office in the hangar, seven young men and one girl, in the dark blue uniforms of the Royal Australian Air Force. Outside the office, the silver bulk of the Ceres loomed immensely, fuelled and ready for flight. The young men stood or sat upon the edge of tables, grave and serious, aware that they were to hear something very important, not knowing what it was.

**"I can type sixty words a minute, but only about thirty of them make sense"**

The radio boomed out the striking of Big Ben, the announcement was made, and the familiar voice began to speak to them, stumbling a little now and then from sheer fatigue.

By the time she had finished, Gillian Foster was in tears.

PROMPTLY at five o'clock they pulled the Ceres out of the hangar, swung her round and ran the engines. They shut down after a short trial, satisfied that everything was in order, and David sat on in the pilot's seat for a time, his mind running over the machine, searching for anything that might have been neglected, any inspection that had been left undone. Below upon the tarmac the Australian sailors had been thrown round the machine in a cordon, to prevent anybody from approaching it in the darkness.

An airline bus from B.O.A.C. came to the hangar presently, a device adopted by Frank Cox to avoid notice. He was travelling in it himself with all the passengers except the Queen and the Consort, and with all the luggage. David went down to meet them, and watched Ryder as he superintended the loading of the suitcases into the aircraft. He said a word or two to Dr. Mitchison and to Macmahon, and suggested that they get into the aircraft out of the cold wind. Then he turned to Rosemary.

"You'd better get in, too," he said. "You're looking very tired."

She said, "I'd like to stay out here for a few minutes. It's fresh here. I've been cooped up in the office for so long." She paused, and then she said, "You heard the broadcast?"

"We heard it all together in the hangar here," he said. "It was very moving."

"Was it a surprise to you?"

He shook his head. "I knew more or less what was coming. I don't think any of the boys did, though."

"How did they take it?"

"You mean, about Tom Forrest? They thought it was a grand idea. But they're Australians, you see, and we're used to having a Governor-General. I don't think it matters how they took it. It's how the British are going to take it that's the important thing."

"I know." She stood for a minute bareheaded, letting the clean, cold air blow through her hair, refreshing her.

"It was a marvellous speech," he said. "Who wrote it for her?"

She sighed. "Everybody," she replied wearily. "Lord Marlow wrote one and the Consort wrote another. And then Tom Forrest had a talk to Daddy, and he sent in one that was practically pure Daddy—every word of it. Major Macmahon had a go at putting them all together for her, and then old Sir Robert Menzies wrote her about three thousand words from Melbourne, some of it quite good. We've been working at it for a fortnight, Nigger. I must have typed it fifteen or twenty times. I've woken up in the middle of the night, over and over again, and found myself repeating bits of it."

He pressed her hand in the darkness, and she smiled up at him. "It's over now," he said. "It's a marvel that such a fine speech could be made up out of so many bits and pieces."

"It wasn't," she replied. "She scrapped the whole lot on Sunday morning, and sat down, and wrote it in her own words, in her own handwriting. After that, she wouldn't let anybody change a thing. I typed it out from what she wrote on eleven quarto sheets of notepaper, and there wasn't an alteration or an erasure in the whole of it."

They stood there in the darkness, hand in hand.

"You were right about Tharwa," he said presently. "Right about it being kept open, I mean. She'll only have been away about three weeks."

"I know. It's better for her to be out of England now, and see what boils up under Tom Forrest. Some of the politicians will be furious."

"With her?"

She looked up quickly. "Oh—no. With the government. With Iorwerth Jones." She paused. "A good bit of it leaked out yesterday, and there was a lot going on behind the scenes. But it was too late then."

"I see. . . ." He knew too little of the British political scene to venture any comment. All he said was: "Tom Forrest'll have quite a bit to do."

She nodded. "*He* won't care. He's speaking on the radio on Wednesday night."

"Do you know what he's going to say?"

She shook her head. "If he says all that he put into her draft speech, he'll start something. And he's quite capable of doing it. He's a fan of Daddy's."

A CHILLY December wind blew in a sharp gust round about them, and she drew a little closer to him. "You ought to get inside," he said gently. "You're very tired, and you'll catch a cold if you stay out in this. When you get out of the machine it will be warm and sunny, with all the flowers out. Remember the courtyard of the Canberra Hotel?"

She nodded. "I hate leaving England," she said in a low tone.

He led her to the aircraft and up the steps into the cabin, and Gillian Foster took charge of her and took her to her seat. David went down again on to the tarmac and glanced at his watch; ten minutes to go before the Royal car was due. He walked underneath the engines, vaguely uneasy, and stood looking up at each of them in turn. It was quite unusual for him to have the needle before a flight; he had flown so often and so far that he was long past that. Everything had been inspected and everything was right, but he was troubled by an anticipation of danger. The tyres, perhaps. He walked over to the great wheels and passed his hand over the treads, from the ground in front to the ground behind, standing upon tip-toe to reach the topmost point. The tyres were perfect, as with his intellect he had known they were. And still he had the sense of danger strong upon him.

He walked over to the gangway where Frank Cox was waiting for the Queen, and stood with him. Exactly at six o'clock the lights of the big Daimler appeared upon the road outside. It stopped at the sentry post where the naval officers were waiting for it, and then came on and drew up by the aircraft. The two officers stood at the salute as the Queen and Consort stepped out.

The Queen said good evening to them, and walked to the gangway; Frank Cox escorted her up into the aircraft. The Consort stopped for a moment and spoke to David. "Where did all these naval officers and ratings come from?" he inquired.

"They're from H.M.A.S. Gona, sir. She's in Portsmouth now."

"Did you produce them?"

"I asked Vice-Admiral O'Keefe for them. They've been here a fortnight."

"They're all Australians, are they?"

"Yes, sir."

"I see. Perhaps that was wise. Thank you, Wing Commander."

He went up the steps into the machine, and David followed him. Jim Hansen, the steward, closed the door behind them, and David went forward to the cockpit to join Ryder. Frank Cox came forward in a minute. "Take off in your own time, Captain." David nodded, and started the inboard engines.

Ten minutes later they were on the climb, heading rather to the east of south upon a course for Cyprus. They flew through layer after layer of cloud in the darkness, till finally they broke out into moonlight and clear skies at about twenty-two thousand feet over northern France. The pilot sat motionless at the controls as the machine climbed higher, still troubled and uneasy in his mind, with the sense of danger strong upon him still.

He was one quarter aboriginal, not wholly of European stock, and in some

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## OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM

directions his perceptions and his sensibilities were stronger than in ordinary men, which possibly accounted for his excellence in flying and for his safety record. That evening he sat at the controls with the unease growing stronger in him every minute, and when at last they reached their operating height and levelled off to cruise, somewhere in the vicinity of Lake Constance, he handed over the control to Ryder, and went aft.

In the flight deck everything was normal. He stopped by the flight engineer's table and peered at the instruments himself, and read the flight log carefully. There was nothing there. He sat down by the radio operator and looked through his log, and peered at the green traces on the cathode tubes, and checked a position on the Decca apparatus. There was nothing there. He passed into the cabin and walked slowly down the length of it, looking for a cracked window that would release the pressure, or for some danger of fire, but everything was in order. The steward and the stewardess were serving dinner; the Queen was in her cabin with the door closed.

DAVID stopped Gillian Foster and nodded to the door. "Everything all right in there?"

The girl said, "Quite all right, sir."

"Had her dinner?"

"Yes, sir."

"Eat it?"

"Oh yes, she ate it nearly all. She had a glass of claret, too."

He passed on down the gangway between the seats. Rosemary looked up at him and smiled, but he hardly saw her. There was something, somewhere, very wrong. His eyes searched everywhere, the ventilators for some issue of smoke, the door latches, the carpets on the floor. He stopped and sniffed keenly for a trace of kerosene, but only smelt good cooking.

Jim Hansen was in the galley. "Everything all right here?"

"We could do with a bigger stove, Cap," said the man. "It's not so easy serving a hot dinner with just the one hot plate and the oven. Think we could get a bigger stove put in?"

He said something absent-mindedly, and went on. Both toilets were vacant, and he looked into each of them, but there was nothing there. He went aft again into the luggage compartment and stood looking at the piled suitcases in the bins, strapped down with webbing straps. Everything seemed in order, but there was something very, very wrong.

The luggage was one thing he had not checked, and nobody of his own crew had checked. He would not rest, he knew, until he had satisfied himself that that was all in order. He pulled a notebook and pencil from his inner breast pocket, and went forward to the cockpit again, to Ryder at the controls. "How many ports have you got on board, Harry?"

"Two suitcases and a haversack. What's this about?"

"Just making a check-up. Are they labelled with your name?"

"The suitcases are. The haversack is in the top bunk there."

He passed on down the aircraft from bow to stern, listing the names of everyone on board with their luggage. He did not disturb the Queen or the Consort, but he got the list of their luggage from the maid and the valet. When he came to Frank Cox, the group captain asked: "What's this for, Nigger?"

"I want to count it all up," the pilot said. "I'm not comfortable about this flight. I've got the heebie-jeebies."

Frank Cox glanced quickly up at him and got out of his seat. There only remained the steward and the stewardess to question, and the pilot turned again to the luggage compartment. "Give me a hand," he said to the steward. "I want to check the cases off against this list."

The group captain followed them into the luggage compartment and the three of them began to unlash and to sort out the luggage.

A quarter of an hour later they came on a discrepancy. There were four cases labelled "E. C. Mitchison," as against three on the list.

"Doctor's made a mistake," said Jim Hansen cheerfully. "He's got four instead of three."

The pilot said: "Slip up and ask him to come down here and identify them."

When the doctor came, David asked: "Are those your four cases?"

"That's not mine," said Mitchison. "Not the green one. The other three are mine."

"It's got your name on it." They showed him the label.

"I'm sure it's not mine," he said. "I only brought the three. I've never seen that before."

David picked it up, laid it on the floor of the gangway, and stooped to undo it. He found it locked. He thought for a moment, and then went forward into the cabin. Over the entrance door there hung a steel bar with flattened ends; the sort of thing used to open packing cases. It was painted red, and it was there for the purpose of opening the door from the inside if it should be jammed tight in its frame by the distortion of the fuselage in a crash.

He pulled this out of its clips, and went back to the suitcase. With two vigorous heaves he broke the hasp, and lifted back the lid. Inside he saw a bundle of sacking. He felt a hard object wrapped up in it. Gently he unwrapped this object, moving it as little as possible, and took it very carefully in his hands, while the others crowded near to see.

It was a metal box, apparently of heavy gauge brass, with soldered joints. It was about twelve inches long, eight or nine wide, and about five inches deep. It weighed twelve or fifteen pounds.

Very carefully he lifted it above his head and looked beneath it. There was no apparent opening, no lid. It seemed to have been soldered solidly together, and not designed to be opened at all.

Very carefully he put it down upon the sacking in the open suitcase.

Frank Cox said quietly: "We'll have to get rid of that, Nigger."

The pilot stood still for an instant. "We'll have to go down," he replied. "We can't jettison out of the pressure shell. We'll have to go down to seven or eight thousand feet. The Queen." He could not risk giving the Queen the diver's bends by opening the pressure hull at any greater altitude than that.

"How long will it take you to get down?"

"Seventeen or eighteen minutes."

THE pilot turned, and went forward swiftly to the flight deck and spoke quickly to the startled engineer and to Ryder at the controls. The inboard engines died, but the outer engines were kept going at reduced revs to maintain the cabin pressure.

David went quickly to the navigator's table and looked at the map, and while he did so the radio operator gave him a new fix by Decca. They were about a hundred miles south-west of Belgrade, and over the Jugoslav mountain ranges with peaks up to ten thousand feet. He laid off a quick course towards the Adriatic and the Ionian Sea, passing over Brindisi in Italy. He turned, and Frank Cox was beside him.

David put a finger on the chart between the toe of Italy and Greece. "We'll drop it somewhere here, if the bloody thing doesn't go off first."

The group captain said: "It's not making any noise, so it's not a time clock. I can't see any breathing holes in it, so it's probably not a barometric fuse. I think it's probably an acid fuse, acid eating through a strip of metal of some sort. If that's so, it'll be pretty far gone, and we'll want to be careful how we move it. Think we'd better land at Brindisi or Bari?"

The pilot hesitated. "I've moved it once, and it's not gone off," he said. "I'm quite game to put it out of the machine myself."

"Where would you put it out?"

"Put down the undercarriage and take off the inspection cover for the forward oleo leg," he said. "It'll fall clear of the machine from there, behind the front wheel." He paused. "We can land at Brindisi," he said. "I've been there. There's a long runway roughly east and west. I think it's lit."

Frank Cox bit his lip. "There's the publicity. . . ."

"I know. We'll have to make our minds up pretty quick." It would be in the newspapers all around the world, that the Queen of England had had to land in Italy to remove a bomb from her aircraft. "I'm quite prepared to drop it out myself," he said again.

"I can't decide this," said the group captain. "I'll have to ask the Consort. I think we ought to land."

HE hurried aft, and David turned quickly to his list of aerodromes along the route. Brindisi was lit upon request for night landings, and was habitually used by the Italian Air Force. He called the second engineer, who was already out of his bunk, and went down with him to the forward luggage hold, now empty, to the inspection plate above the undercarriage leg. "Loosen up these studs," he said. "Be ready to open this up pretty quick."

He went back to the flight deck; they were now down to about twenty thousand feet in clear air; ahead of them a little starry cluster of lights showed upon the land, which must be Brindisi. He turned to meet Frank Cox. "She won't have it," the group captain said. "She won't land. We've got to put it out of the machine over the sea."

David nodded. "I've got Cummings ready to take off the plate, down in the forward hold," he said. "If you'll go down there, I'll go aft and fetch it along. Keep your fingers crossed." He turned to Ryder. "Steer south now, one eight zero true. You'll come out over the sea again in a couple of minutes. Go on down like this, and level out at seven thousand feet. Then decompress. Then reduce speed to two hundred knots and flaps half down. Then lower the undercarriage. Carry on like that till I tell you."

The second pilot repeated the instructions, and David went quickly aft through the saloon to the luggage bay. Jim Hansen was still there standing guard over the suitcase. He was very white. "I've been saying me prayers, sir," he said.

"Well, keep on saying them for about five minutes longer." The pilot stooped, and took the metal case in both his hands, wondering if this was the end of it for all of them. He raised it to the level of his waist, and turned and walked forward into the saloon, and up between the lines of seats. As

he passed Rosemary, he heard her say softly, "Good luck, Nigger."

He came to the cabins, and the Queen was standing at her door with the Consort at her side; she was in a white flowered dressing-gown. She said, "Is that it, Commander?"

He paused for a moment. "That's it, madam. We'll be rid of it in a few minutes now."

She said quietly: "I'm so sorry for you all. This wouldn't have happened if I hadn't been on board."

He left her and went forward, walking very carefully; although if it went off in any part of the machine it would mean certain death for all of them, it seemed to him to be important to remove it from the Queen as far as possible. The forward hold was reached by a hatch in the flight deck under the engineer's seat covered by a hinged duralumin flap, now open. Below were two ladder rungs on the side of the aircraft and then the floor of the hold, with very little headroom. The radio officer came forward and offered to hold the thing for him as he went down. David made him sit upon the floor and put it in his hands, and went down through the hole, and, standing on the floor below, reached up and took it from him. The boy went back to his desk, streaming with sweat.

CROUCHED down by the inspection plate were the group captain and the engineer, Cummings. David moved very cautiously towards them in the dim light, stooping almost double, terrified of stumbling or hitting his head against some unseen beam and dropping the box. He knelt down beside them with it still unshaken in his hands, and said, "Well, here we are. What's the betting the bloody thing goes off before we get it out?"

"Five to one on," said Cummings.

The group captain said: "What's our altitude now?"

"I don't know," said David. "We must be pretty well down. I didn't stop to ask."

They waited, tense and motionless, as the minutes crept by. It would be bad luck, thought David, if the thing went off now. . . . His wrists ached with holding it. When suddenly the attitude of the machine began to alter and a change in the whisper of the air told that she was slowing down, it came almost as a surprise. He glanced at Cox, and met his eyes.

"Levelling out," said the group captain.

Finally came the action they were waiting for, the clank and hiss immediately beneath their feet as the undercarriage fell, and the shock as it was locked in place.

David said to Cummings, "Get that plate off now."

The engineer worked methodically, removing the studs one by one and putting them with the washers into the breast pocket of his overall. Finally, the last stud was removed and he lifted the plate.

*[Abridged by John Bull]*

***To be concluded next week***

## *LIFE WITH FATHER*

*Here is the missing person from the photograph on page 32—Walter Huston, with his son, John Huston.*

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## HOW TO WIN

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

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On The Peace Road
Holiday For John
The New Russia
Youth, The Adventurer
All We Need
Doctor Sunshine
How To Make Money
Into The Unknown
Castles May Crumble, But
Happy And Glorious
Way It Should Be
Stirring Story
Rocked The Boat
He's A Highbrow, So
Roar Of The Traffic
Exploded
Grandpa's Marrow
At The Fun Fair
Gay Cavalier
Quick Off The Mark

**Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions**

In The.....Today
.....Had A Dip And
Couldn't Be.....
As If She Were.....
Postcard From.....
Got The.....Out

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**Across Clues** **XWORD 847**

1. Many thousands are enjoying doing this again
5. Some kinds of game are unlikely ever to be this on tables
8. Water-colourist likes this of his picture to be clear
9. Careless, unmethodical housewife may well find that what she owes isn't easy to
11. There are circumstances in which this can be crazy and mad
12. People often find these difficult to understand
13. To average fellow, Whitehall regulations aren't really much of a one

**Down Clues**

1. For many a mechanical job some sort of pin is this
2. There are writers who dislike this of popularity
3. This is likely to annoy opposition in Parliament
4. You have a problem, with clubs short of
6. One may possibly spoil a person's really good case
7. Hubby can't expect his favourite this for breakfast every day
10. Quite often punishment will only leave a wilful child like this
11. Young kiddy who's been put in one can't be expected to sit there quietly, contentedly for long

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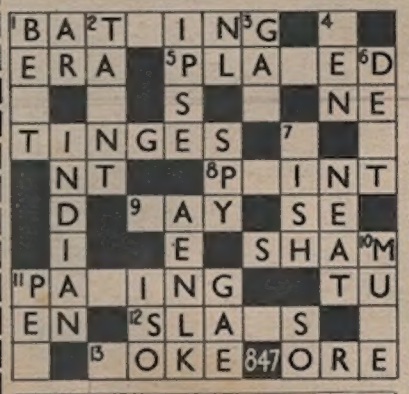

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Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

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2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests (in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated August 15, and in JOHN BULL dated August 22), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

**(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, August 8, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,895 result.)**

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "COMBINED," top left-hand corner.

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